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XENOPHON

By SIR ALEXANDER GRANT, BART., LL.D.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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HERODOTUS

BY

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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INTRODUCTION.

So little is known for certain regarding the life of Herodotus, "the father of history," that it may well be a subject of congratulation that he has not shared the fate of Homer, the father of poetry, in having doubt thrown on his individual existence.

He appears to have been born about the year 484 before Christ, between the two great Persian invasions of Greece, at Halicarnassus, a colony of Dorian Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor. His family was one of some distinction. From his writings alone we should know that he received a liberal education, and became familiarly acquainted with the current literature of his day; and the epic form of his great prose work, besides numberless expressions and allusions, bears witness to the fact that the Homeric poems were his constant study and model.

His early manhood was spent in extensive travels, in which he accumulated the miscellaneous materials of his narrative. He visited, in the course of them, a great part of the then known world; from Babylon and Susa in the east, to the coast of Italy in the

west; and from the mouths of the Dnieper and the Danube in the north, to the cataracts of Upper Egypt southwards. Thus his travels covered a distance of thirty-one degrees of longitude from east to west, and twenty-four of latitude from north to south—an area of something like 1700 miles square. It was an immense range in days when there were few facilities for locomotion, and when every country was supposed to be at war with its neighbours, unless bound by express treaties of peace and alliance. He travelled, too, it must be remembered, in an age when robbers by land and sea were members of a recognised profession,—very lucrative and not entirely disreputable: when (as we shall see hereafter) disappointed political or military adventurers took to piracy as a last resort, without any sort of compunction. “Pray, friends, are you pirates,—or what?” is the question which old Nestor puts to his visitors, in the ‘Odyssey,’ without the least intention either of jesting or of giving offence. A voyage itself was such a perilous matter, that a Greek seaman never, if he could help it, lost sight of land in the daytime, or remained on board his ship during the night; and at a later date the philosopher Aristotle distinctly admits that even his ideal “brave” man may, without prejudice to his character, fear the being drowned at sea. The range of our author’s travels is, however, less wonderful than their busy minuteness. He is traveller, archaeologist, natural philosopher, and historian combined in one. He appears scarcely ever to have concluded his visit to a country without exhausting every available source of information. Personal inquiry alone seems to have satisfied him, wherever it could be made; though he consulted carefully all written materials within his

reach, records public and private, sacred and secular. He rightly calls his work a "History," for the Greek word "history" means really "investigation," though it has passed into a different use with us. In Egypt alone he seems to have spent many years, visiting and exploring its most remarkable cities—Memphis, Hieropolis, and the "hundred-gated" Thebes. In Greece proper, as well as its colonies on the Asiatic seaboard and in South Italy, and in all the islands of the Archipelago, he is everywhere at home, as well as in the remoter regions of Asia Minor.

Such details of his life as have come down to us rest on somewhat doubtful authority. It is said that he was driven from Halicarnassus to Samos by the tyranny of Lygdamis, grandson of that Queen Artemisia whose conduct he nevertheless, with some generosity, immortalises in his account of the battle of Salamis; that in Samos he learned the Ionic dialect in which his history is written; that in time he returned to head a successful insurrection against Lygdamis, but then, finding himself unpopular, joined in the Athenian colonisation of Thurium, in Italy, where he died and was buried, and where his tomb in the market-place was long shown. His residence at Samos may have been a fiction invented to explain the dialect in which he wrote, which was more probably that consecrated by usage to historical composition. At one time he appears to have removed to Athens, where he received great honours, partly in the substantial shape of ten talents (more than £2400), after a public recitation of his history. According to one story, he was commissioned to read it before the Assembly of all the Greek States on the occasion of

the great national games held every fourth year at Olympia in Elia.

Amongst the audience on some such occasion, most probably at Athens, a young Athenian, Thucydides, is said to have been present; and the introduction which then took place may have given the first stimulus to the future historian of the Peloponnesian war, who, despairing of surpassing his predecessor as a charming story-teller, boldly struck out for himself a new path, as the founder of the critical method. It seems also that at Athens Herodotus enjoyed the friendship of the great tragic poet Sophocles. Plutarch has preserved the opening words of a poem in which the tragedian compliments the historian, after he had quitted Athens for Thurium. In two of the tragedies of Sophocles, the 'Edipus at Colonus' and the 'Antigone,' are passages plainly adapted from this history. The society of Athens under Pericles, comprising all that was most select and brilliant in art and intellect, must have had great attractions for Herodotus; and it implies some self-denial on his part to have torn himself away from it. Probably he longed to exercise, as most Greeks did, full political rights, which, as an alien, he could not enjoy at Athens, though he was evidently an enthusiastic admirer of her institutions.

After his emigration to Thurium, he seems to have devoted his life to the elaboration and amplification of his great work. Several passages in his history prove that he was, at all events, acquainted with the earlier events of the great Peloponnesian war. The balance of evidence seems to point to his death having occurred when he was about sixty. If so, he at least escaped witnessing, as the result of that war, the fall of his

beloved Athens from her well-won supremacy over Greece.

The history of Herodotus is a great prose epic, suggested doubtless to the author in early life by the fame of those events which were still fresh in the minds of all men—the repulse of the Persian invasion, and the liberation of Greece. The Greeks had thrown off colonies, from time to time, into the islands of the Levant and the west coast of Asia.* These Asiatic Greeks had actually been enslaved by Persia; and European Greece, though free from the first, could only wake to the full consciousness of that freedom when the overshadowing dread of the monster Asiatic power had been dissipated. Independence could be but a name for either Athenian or Spartan, so long as the very sight of the Persian dress (as Herodotus tells us) inspired terror. Until Miltiades won Marathon, by a rush as apparently desperate as our Balaklava charge, the Persians had been reputed invincible. Their second expedition against Greece was intended to repair the damaged prestige of Persian valour, by setting in motion overwhelming numbers. It seemed as if the dead weight alone of Asiatic fleets and armies must carry all before it. It did indeed carry Athens, but not the Athenians. The sea-fight of Salamis was won by citizens who had lost their city. The two great victories which followed within a year—Platæa and Mycæ, gained on the same day—indicated for ever the superiority of Europeans over Asiatics. The latter was fought out

* Of these colonies, some were Ionian, some Dorian, and some Æolian, having been originally founded by each of these old Greek races. But Herodotus usually speaks of them all as "Ionians," as these took the most active share in the war.

on Asiatic ground—the beginning of the great retribution which has continued even to the present time, represented by uncertain tides of Western conquest gradually gaining ground on the East.

Never before or since has an author employed himself with grander subject-matter than Herodotus. The victories of Freedom in all ages, more than any other conquests, have stirred the human heart to its depths. It is the cause that alone humanises war, and makes it other than brutal butchery. Many such victories there have been in the course of time, but all of local and limited importance in comparison. And, indeed, perhaps Marathon made Morgarten possible. By Salamis and Plataea the world may have escaped being orientalised for ever, and bound in the immobility of China. These battles, by saving freedom and securing progress, anticipated the overthrow of the Saracens before Tours, and of the Turks before Vienna. Herodotus, indeed, could not see all this, when the plan of his great history dawned on his mind, but the salvation of his beloved Greece was to him a sufficient inspiration.

We find the same unity of design in the history of Herodotus as in Homer's great epic. As in the 'Iliad,' not the siege of Troy but the wrath of Achilles is the continual burden, so, in our author's work, not the history of Greece but the destruction of the great Persian armada is its one great subject. All the other local histories, though introduced with much fulness of detail, are subordinate to this consummation. They flow to it like the tributaries of a river, whose might and grandeur make men love to explore its sources. He gives us in succession the early history of Lydia, of Babylon, and of Assyria, in order to trace the rise

and fall of those several Asiatic powers which merged at last in the great empire of the Medes and Persians, who are the actors in his true drama, to which these preliminary histories are a discursive prologue. His work is not a romance founded on fact, like Xenophon's 'Education of Cyrus,' or Shakspeare's historical plays, or Scott's 'Quentin Durward.' It is serious history, as history was understood in his time. But the historian's appetite was omnivorous in the collection of materials, and robustly digested fable and fact alike. His mind was like that of Froissart and Philip de Comines, who lived in another age, when miracles were thought matters of course. Yet in Herodotus we perceive the dawning of that criticism which finds its full expression in Thucydides, who was in mind a modern historian, though less fastidious as to the evidence of facts than a man of our century would be. The incredulity of Herodotus, when it shows itself, seems rather evoked by the suspected veracity of his informant, or some contradiction in phenomena, than by the incredible nature of the facts themselves.

He has been most found fault with for ascribing effects to inadequate causes ; but we ought rather to feel grateful to him, considering the mould in which the mind of his time was cast, for endeavouring to trace the connection between cause and effect at all. In Homer the gods are always in requisition, and always at hand to manage matters, even in minutest details. That Herodotus had a religious mind there can be no doubt, for he speaks even of foreign and barbaric rites and beliefs with intense respect. And the great Liberation War of Greece was, in its circumstances, calculated to illustrate one great pervading principle of his

religion—that heaven will not allow an excess of mortal prosperity. The rock which overhung the bay of Salamis, whence Xerxes looked down on his host, might well bear the statue of Nemesis. Nemesis, in the religious system of the ancient Greeks, is the great divine stewardess, who assigns to man his quota of good or of evil. If man takes to himself more good than his share, she adjusts the balance by giving him evil; for the gods are jealous of those who try to vie with them. Did not Apollo flay Marsyas for daring to contend with him on the lyre? Did not Minerva change Arachne into a spider for boasting to be a better spinster than herself? So the Sovereign of the gods cannot endure the luxury and pride of the earthly despot. It becomes the business of Nemesis to compass his destruction. She invokes against him Atè, or Infatuation. Atè blindfolds his mind, and forces him to enter of his own will on the path whose end is destruction. To ward off this, men resort to sacrifice; but any sacrifice short of what is most precious is useless. Polycrates, the despot of Samos, almost insults the gods in supposing that throwing a jewel into the sea will atone for the crime of prosperous sovereignty; the ring comes back to him in a fish brought to his table. Was not Agamemnon compelled to sacrifice his daughter, the pride of his house, before he could obtain a fair wind to sail to Troy? It seems to have been an article of the Athenians' creed, which Herodotus shared, that there was a sort of wickedness in one free man attempting to rise above the level of his fellow-citizens; and perhaps they thought that their honourable punishment of ostracism was devised as

much for a great man's good as for theirs.* It was a kind of inverted doctrine of the divine right of kings, traces of which we find throughout the Attic literature. Had Herodotus lived in our day, we may imagine that his attention would have been powerfully arrested by the fate of Napoleon the First, or the Czar Nicholas of Russia, as illustrating this sentiment.

Frequent references will be found in these pages to Mr Rawlinson's 'History of Herodotus;' but it is desired here to acknowledge more distinctly the use which has been made of his exhaustive volumes.

The History of Herodotus was divided by the ancients into nine books, each bearing the name of one of the Muses. His own order of narration is very discursive, for he digresses into local history and anecdote continually. In these pages a rearrangement into chapters will perhaps be more welcome to the general reader.

* Ostracism was so called from the oyster-shells on which Athenian citizens wrote their names in voting. Any man of more than average greatness or goodness was liable to incur this left-handed compliment, which consisted in his being requested to go abroad for a term of years, in case a sufficient number of votes was given. It was instituted as a security to democracy, and as preventive of *coups d'état*. It was discredited at last by its application to the case of a vulgar demagogue. The Syracusans had a similar institution called "Petalism," from the leaves of olive on which the names were written.

THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS.

CHAPTER I.

CRÆSUS.

" And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs."

—MILTON, "L'Allegro."

IN the great quarrel between Europe and Asia, which is the end and scope of our author's work, it is of the utmost consequence to the satisfaction of his religious principles that the balance of blame should incline to the side of the true offenders. According to the showing of the Persians themselves, who had their story-tellers, if not historians, the Asiatics were the first offenders. A Phœnician skipper went to Argos, and carried off Io, the king's daughter, to Egypt, whither he was bound. By way of reprisals, the Greeks then carried off two women for one—Europa from Tyre, and Medea from Colchis. This may have partly excused Alexander or Paris, son of Priam king of Troy, for carrying off Helen, the wife of Menelaus, from Sparta, in the second generation afterwards. But then, said the Persians, the Greeks put themselves clearly in the wrong


—for instead of carrying off another lady, they made the abduction of Helen a case of war. “To carry off women was manifestly the deed of unjust men, but to make so serious matter of their abduction was the part of simpletons, since they hardly could have been carried off without their own consent.” Indeed, according to one account, Io at least eloped of her own free will. But in fact, our historian thinks, from the time of the Trojan war the Asiatics looked upon the Greeks as their natural enemies.

Without discussing too curiously all these tales, Herodotus has no doubt in his own mind that the blame ought to lie with the Asiatics, since Croesus, king of Lydia, was the first historical aggressor. Before his time all the Greeks were free, and he was the first Asiatic potentate who, by fair means or foul, reduced Grecian states to various kinds of dependency. The towns on the coast he subdued by force, easily enough. He had proposed to try the same means with the islanders of the Archipelago, when he was dissuaded from his purpose by a shrewd jest. Among other travellers who visited his court was one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece—Bias of Priene. The king asked him, as he did all his visitors, what was the last news? “The islanders,” said Bias, “are busy raising a force of cavalry with which they mean to invade Lydia.” Croesus declared it was the very thing he could wish,—but he hardly believed they could be so utterly foolish. Bias ventured to think that the Greek islanders would be equally amused to hear that the Lydians intended to attack them on their own element. The king took the hint: and it is the earliest specimen we have of the wisdom which after-

wards so often clothed itself in the language of the "Court Fool."

The Lydians appear to have been a people, like the Egyptians, of nearly immemorial civilisation, and, like the Asiatic tribes who fought for the Trojans, to have had a common origin with the Greeks themselves, and to have differed little from them in manners and customs. There is manifest truth in the tradition which connected them with the Etruscans and the Pelasgians; and their three dynasties, of the second of which Hercules was said to be the founder, may have represented three cognate races of conquerors, like the Saxons, Danes, and Normans with us. They appear to have been at first a warlike people, but to have been enervated by conquest, and then, like the descendants of the ancient Italians, to have become chiefly famous as artists, especially as musicians.

This Cræsus, the son of Alyattes, in time extended his empire over most of the countries westward of the river Halys. He was, in some sort, the Solomon of his age; fabulously rich, magnificent in his expenditure, and of unbounded hospitality; so that great men came to visit him from all parts, and to gaze on the splendours of his court. Amongst them was Solon the Athenian. Solon had remodelled the laws of Athens, with the concurrence of the Athenian people; but, knowing the fickleness of his countrymen, had gone into voluntary exile for ten years, having bound them by oath that they would make no change in their institutions in his absence. Cræsus, in the course of his conversations with Solon, wished to extract from him the confession that he considered him the happiest of mankind. Solon refused to account any man happy till death had



set its seal on his felicity, and took occasion to warn Croesus of the instability of all human affairs, dilating especially on the jealous nature of the gods. The king could not brook the plain-speaking of his guest, and dismissed him in disfavour. He was soon to prove the truth of his warning: the terrible Nemesis, says our author, was awakened—probably, he thinks, by this very boast of thinking himself the happiest of mortals. Then he goes on to tell, in his own delightful fashion—

THE STORY OF ADRASTUS.

Croesus had two sons—the one grievously afflicted, for he was deaf and dumb, but the other by far the first of the youths of his age, by name Atys. Now Croesus dreamed that he should lose this Atys by the stroke of an iron weapon. Through fear of this dream, he took him no longer with him to the wars, but sought out for him a wife who might keep him at home. Nay, he even had all the weapons that hung in the men's rooms stacked away in the inner chambers, lest any of them might fall on him by accident. While the marriage was preparing, there came to seek refuge at Sardis a Phrygian of royal birth who had committed homicide. Croesus purified him with the due rites, and then inquired his name. He said, "I am Adrastus, son of Gordias; I slew my brother by misadventure, and my father has turned me out of doors, and I have lost all." And Croesus answered, "Thou art the son of a friend, and art come to friends; with me thou shalt lack nothing. Thou wilt do best to bear thy mishap as lightly as thou mayest." About this time it came to pass that a huge wild boar came out of

Mount Olympus in Mysia and laid waste the fields ; and the people came to Cræsus and besought him to send to them his son to help them with the hunting-train. And Cræsus, mindful of the dream, refused to send his son, but promised to send the train and picked sportsmen of the Lydians. But his son Atys coming in, was much vexed, and said, "Thou bringest me to shame, my father, in the eyes of the citizens and of my bride, in that thou dost forbid me to go to the wars and the chase, as though I were a coward." But Cræsus said, "I hold thee no coward, yet I do wisely, for I was warned by a dream that an iron weapon should slay thee ; therefore did I give thee a wife to keep thee at home. For thou art in truth my only son, for the other I count as though he were not, being deaf and dumb." Then answered the son, "It is natural, my father, to take good heed on my behalf, after such a dream. But what iron weapon hath a boar, or what hands to hurl it ? If indeed thou hadst dreamed that I should die by a tusk, thou wouldst be wise in doing what thou doest, but not now, for this war is not with men." Cræsus confessed himself persuaded by these words, and allowed his son to join the chase ; but he begged Adrastus to go with him and guard him, lest any evil should happen by the way ; and Adrastus, though heavy of heart, deemed that he could deny Cræsus nothing in return for his kindness, and went accordingly. So the hunters made a great hunt, and having brought the boar to bay, stood round and threw javelins at him. And it came to pass that Adrastus threw his javelin, and missed the boar, and killed the son of Cræsus. So the dream was fulfilled. Now Cræsus, when he heard the news, was

soresly troubled, and in his anguish called on Jupiter as lord of purification, as lord of the hearth, as lord of companionship, to witness what he suffered at the hands of his suppliant, his guest, and the man whom he had sent to guard his son. And now came the Lydians bearing the corpse, and behind them followed the slayer, Adrastus. And he, standing before the bier and stretching forth his hands, besought Cræsus to take his life, as he was no longer worthy to live. Then Cræsus, though in great grief, pitied him and said, "Thou hast made full atonement, in that thou hast judged thyself worthy of death. Thou art not to blame, but as a tool in the hands of some god, who long since did signify to me what should come to pass." So Cræsus buried his son, and spared Adrastus. But when he was departed, Adrastus, as thinking himself of all men the most wretched, slew himself upon the tomb. And Cræsus mourned for his son for the space of two years. But at the end of that time he was fain to bestir himself, for there came to him a rumour that Cyrus the Persian had conquered the Medes, and was exalting himself above all the kings of the earth ; and he hasted, if it were possible, to crush the Persian power before it became too strong.

Cræsus, in Herodotus' story, appears in close relations with the god Apollo. The world-famous shrine of this god was at Delphi on Mount Parnassus, currently believed to be the exact centre of the earth—the earth itself being looked upon as a round disc. In the temple there, the site of which was supposed to be the spot where the serpent Python was slain by the arrows of the Sun-god, there was an oracle, the most renowned

in the world. Its answers, in spite of their ambiguity, guided the public and private affairs of the Greeks to an extent which appears to us now almost ludicrous. Though generally vague and perplexing, yet they were often so much to the point, that some of the old Fathers of the Church attributed them to Satanic influence, as they doubtless would table-turning and spirit-rapping, if they lived now. It was also believed that their efficacy ceased exactly with the coming of our Lord, by which time, at all events, faith in them had worn out. Milton alludes to this tradition in his "Hymn on the Nativity":—

"The oracles are dumb;
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell."

Before he determined on his expedition against Cyrus, Cræsus sent to test the most famous oracles in Greece and that of Jupiter Ammon in Libya, in order that he might know which was most to be trusted. And he made the trial thus: he told his messengers to ask each oracle, on the hundredth day after their departure, what Cræsus was doing at that particular hour. The other answers are unrecorded, but the answer of the priestess of Apollo at Delphi ran thus:—

"Truly the tale of the sand I know, and the measures of
 ocean—

Defly the dumb I read, I list to the voice of the silent.

A. C. vol. iii.

B

Savotr has reached my sense from afar of a strong-skinned tortoise

Simmering, mixed together with flesh of lamb, in a caldron ;
Brazen the bed is beneath, and brazen the coverlet over."

Croesus, when he received this answer, judged the god of Delphi to be the wisest, since he alone could tell exactly what he was doing—for he had been cooking the flesh of a tortoise, mixed with lamb's flesh, in a brass caldron with a brass lid. Accordingly he sent rich presents to the shrine of Apollo, and ordered all his subjects to pay him especial honours. Thus having satisfied himself that this oracle at least was true, he next sent to inquire if he should go to war with the Persians. The answer was, that if he did so "he would ruin a great empire;" at which answer Croesus rejoiced greatly, for he expected to destroy the empire of the Persians. He sent a third time and inquired of the oracle if his reign would be long? And the oracle answered:—

"When it shall come to pass that the Medes have a mule
for monarch,
Lydian, tender of foot, then along by the pebbles of
Hermus
Flee, and delay not then, nor shame thee to quail as a
coward."

Croesus rejoiced still more when he heard this, for he thought that, as a mule could never reign over men, the rule of himself and his descendants would never come to an end.

His next step, still under the advice of the oracle, was to make friends of the most powerful Greek kings. At this point Herodotus, having wound his tale up to the expectation of a catastrophe, like some

modern novelists, diverges into one of his favourite episodes, and takes advantage of the fact that Cræsus found the leading Greek states to be the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to relate a part of their history.

At Athens, Pisistratus, the son of Hippocrates, had now raised himself to absolute power. Athens being divided between the parties of the Plain and the Coast, he had headed the third, called the party of the Mountain, and by pretending that his enemies had wounded him, managed to be allowed a body-guard, and then seized on the citadel. He had some vicissitudes of fortune before he was firm in the saddle, and on one occasion returned to Athens in a chariot accompanied by a woman of great beauty and stature, who personated the goddess Athenè (Minerva).* The success of the imposition is possible, if we remember that the early Greeks believed that the gods sometimes came down visibly among mortals. By whatever devices, however, he gained or secured the sovereignty, he appears to have ruled well and righteously, and to have done much for the civilisation and glory of Athens.

The Spartans or Lacedæmonians were now beginning to assert the leadership which they afterwards obtained in the Peloponnese, as a consequence of those laws of Lycurgus, whose sole end and object was to make Sparta a model barrack for a state of soldiers.

With the Spartans Cræsus had no difficulty in concluding an alliance, as the path of friendship had

* If he had also been accompanied by the owl of that goddess, the case would have been very like one which occurred in the remembrance of this generation, when a fugitive prince landed in France with a tame eagle on his shoulder.

been paved by a previous interchange of gifts and civilities; they had also heard of the Delphic prophecies. He immediately proceeded to commence a campaign against the Persians by marching into Cappadocia. A sensible Lydian made one last effort to dissuade him. "O king," said he, "thou art about to march against men who have trousers of leather, and all the rest of their dress of leather, and they feed not on what they would like but on what they have; for their land is rough. Nay more, they are unacquainted with wine, being water-drinkers, and they have no figs to eat, nor anything else that is good. If thou conquerest them, thou canst get nothing from them, for they have nothing to lose; if thou dost not, thou wilt lose all thine own good things. There will be no thrusting them back when once they have had a taste of what we enjoy; nay, I thank the gods that they do not put it into the mind of the Persians to march against the Lydians."

In undertaking this war, Croesus was prompted partly by ambition, partly by his desire to punish Cyrus for dethroning Astyages, the king of Media, who was his brother-in-law. Crossing the river Halys,* the northern boundary, he advanced to the country near Sinope, on the Black Sea—in modern times notorious as the scene of the destruction of the Turkish fleet by the Russians. Here Cyrus marched out to meet him. A battle took place in which both sides claimed the victory. Croesus, however, thinking his numbers too small for ultimate success, determined to fall back on Sardis, and begin the war again after the winter with larger forces. He sent round to his allies to tell them to join him in four

* Now the Kizil Irmak.

months' time. But his long course of prosperity was drawing to its close. Cyrus had not been so crippled by the battle but that he could march straight to Sardis and so "bring the news of his own arrival." Cræsus, though surprised, led out the Lydians to meet him. They were at this time as good men of war as any in Asia. They fought, like the knights of chivalry, on horseback, with long lances; and the plain before Sardis was the battle-field of their predilection. But Cyrus invented a device to paralyse this cavalry. Taking advantage of a horse's natural fear of camels, he organised a camel brigade and placed it in his front, with infantry behind it, and his own cavalry in the rear. Though the Lydian knights, like the Austrians at Sem-pach, dismounted and fought on foot, the battle went against them, and Cræsus soon found himself besieged in his capital. Then he sent messengers to his allies urging them to help him with all speed.

The Spartans, even had they been able to reach Sardis in time, could not set out at once, as they happened just then to have their hands full. They were fighting with the men of Argos about a tract of borderland called Thyrea. Argos had been in the old Homeric times the head of the Peloponnesus, and was always very jealous of Spartan supremacy. The plausible plan had been adopted of fighting out this particular quarrel by three hundred chosen men on each side; though three on each side, as in the affair of the Horatii and Curiatii between Rome and Alba, might have answered the purpose quite as well. The combat proved as deadly as that between the rival Highland clans recorded by Scott in his 'Fair Maid of Perth.' Two only of the Argives were left,

who ran home with the news of the victory ; while a single Spartan, raising himself up from amongst a heap of dead, remained in possession of the field and set up a trophy. So the result was considered indecisive, and the main armies fell to fighting, and the Spartans conquered. Then the Argives shorn their hair, which they formerly wore long, and bound themselves under a curse not to let it grow again till they had recovered Thyrea, and forbade their women to wear gold ornaments—a prohibition probably more difficult to enforce. The Spartans, in retaliation, made a contrary vow, to let their hair grow, having worn it cropped before. The survivor of their three hundred was said to have slain himself for shame.

In the mean time Croesus was a lost man. The citadel of Sardis had been scaled by the Persians at a point where a king of old had omitted to carry round a lion, which was to operate as a charm to prevent its being taken. It has been mentioned that Croesus had a son who was deaf and dumb. His father had tried in vain all means to cure him of his affliction, and given up the attempt in despair. But now, when Sardis was taken, a soldier approached Croesus, not knowing who he was, to slay him ; and Croesus, in his deep grief, did not care to hinder him, which he might have done by giving his name, since Cyrus had issued express orders to his army that the king of Lydia was to be taken alive. Then suddenly the tongue of the youth was loosed, and when he saw the Persian approaching, he cried out—"Fellow, do not kill Croesus!" and having made this beginning, he continued able to speak for the rest of his life. Thus Croesus was taken prisoner, after a reign of fourteen years, and Cyrus, in the cruel spirit of

the age, placed him on a pile of wood, with the intention of burning him alive. Then Cræsus bethought him of the wise words of Solon, how no man should be accounted happy until the end, and in his anguish called aloud thrice upon Solon's name. Cyrus asked the meaning of the cry, and when he heard the story, was so touched that he ordered the pile, which was already lighted, to be put out. But this could not be done by all their exertions until Cræsus prayed to Apollo for aid, when suddenly a great storm of rain came on and extinguished the fire.

Cyrus treated his royal prisoner with all honour. When the Persian soldiers began to plunder Sardis, Cræsus inquired of his conqueror what they were doing. "Spoiling thy goods, O Cræsus." "Nay, not mine," replied the fallen monarch, "but thine, O Cyrus." Then Cyrus stopped the sack of the city, and in gratitude for the suggestion of Cræsus, begged him to name any favour he could do him. "My lord," said he, "suffer me to send these chains to the god at Delphi, and to ask if this is how he requites his benefactors, and whether ingratitude is an attribute of Greek gods in general?" For Cræsus had loaded the shrine of Apollo with costly presents. The message was sent, and the priestess of the oracle made this reply: "Cræsus atones for his forefather Gyges, who slew Candaules his master. Apollo desired that the judgment should fall on the son of Cræsus and not on himself, but the gods themselves cannot avert fate. The god did what he could, for he deferred the fall of Sardis three years beyond the destined time: secondly, he put out the fire, and prevented Cræsus being burnt alive: thirdly, he did not give a lying oracle, for he only said that

Croesus should destroy a great empire, without saying what empire it should be. Croesus had no right to interpret his words according to his own wish. As to the oracle about the mule, he might have known that Cyrus was a Persian by his father's side and a Mede by his mother's, and so a hybrid king." Croesus was obliged to acquiesce in the explanation, and to take his fate patiently. His ruin was, indeed, no common bankruptcy. "As rich as Croesus" soon grew into a vernacular proverb. Yet he was by no means a bad specimen of the millionaire. His gentleness and good-nature were as proverbial as his wealth, and Pindar, the Theban poet, testifies to this point—doubtless for substantial reasons of his own :—

"Of kindly Croesus and his worth
The name doth never fade."

The strange vicissitudes of his life became a fertile subject for Greek romancers and moralists. His riches seem to have been derived partly from the grains of gold brought down in the sand of the river Pactolus, which made Asia Minor the California of antiquity. This was doubtless the origin of the fable of the Phrygian king Midas turning all that he touched to gold. It seems that Sardis in early times was an important place of trade, as Herodotus says that the Lydians were the first coiners of money and the first storekeepers, so far as was known. It was at the same time notorious as the great slave-market of the world.

CHAPTER II.

CYRUS.

“ Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o’ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall’d temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak
Up-reared of human hands.”

—BYRON, “Childe Harold.”

BEFORE the Medes or Persians made their appearance in history, the Assyrians, according to Herodotus, had ruled over upper Asia for five hundred and twenty years. Asshur appears in Scripture * as a son of Shem, who went out from the land of Shinar and founded Nineveh. Herodotus is supposed to have written a separate history of Assyria, which has been lost ; but Layard and others have deciphered for us a new history from the monuments of that wonderful empire. The bearded kings and warriors, with their wars and lion-hunts graven on sandstone slabs, which are to be seen in the British Museum and in the Louvre in Paris, look as fresh as if they had been sculptured yesterday instead of nearly three thousand years ago. The Assyrians were of the Semitic race, of the same family as the

* Gen. x. 11, 22.

Jews and Arabs ; while the Medes and Persians were, in Scriptural phrase, of the sons of Japheth—that is, they belonged to the same Aryan, Iranian, or Indo-Germanic family as the Greeks and Romans, and ourselves. The home of the Assyrians and their cognate Babylonians was in the great plain of Mesopotamia, while the Medes lived in the mountains to the east, and the Persians to the south-east. The Median highlanders, being of more hardy habits, first conquered the Assyrian lowlanders, and then, descending to their softer country and habits, were conquered in their turn by the hardier Persians. The decline of Assyria was consummated by the fall of Nineveh, which was taken, about B.C. 625, by Cyaxares, third king of the Medes, in conjunction with the Babylonians. The first king of the Medes is said to have been Deioces, who built the wonderful city called by Herodotus Agbatana,* and less correctly by later writers Ecbatana, with its seven circular walls, one within the other, with the palace and treasuries in the centre. The first wall had white battlements, the second black, the third scarlet, the fourth blue, the fifth orange. The last two walls had their battlements silvered and gilt. They rose one above another on a conical hill, and were supposed to have had a symbolic meaning, as referring to the sun, moon, and five planets, or the deities presiding over the days of the week. The last king of the Medes was Astyages, the son of Cyaxares. He had given his daughter Mandane in marriage to Cambyses, who was, according to our author's account, a poor Persian gentleman, but according to later authorities, a descendant of the first Persian king Achæ-

* In the Behistun inscription it is Hagmatāna.

menes. Astyages dreamed that he saw a vine spring from the body of his daughter Mandane, which overshadowed the whole of Asia. We know from Scripture how much stress the Chaldeans and the Medes laid on dreams. Fearing that an offspring of Mandane would deprive him of his sovereignty, Astyages ordered the son that was born of her to be destroyed. The courtier Harpagus, who was commissioned to do this, passed on the child to one of the royal herdsmen, that he might expose it to die upon the mountains. But the herdsman's wife, when she saw that it was "a proper child," and plainly of noble birth, adorned for death with gorgeous apparel, took pity on the infant, and as she had just lost one of her own, persuaded her husband to expose the dead child, and save the living one, that she might nurse it. So the future Cyrus lived, while the herdsman's child received a royal funeral. When the boy was ten years old he was playing one day with the children of his village. The game was King and Courtiers. Cyrus was chosen king, and assumed the dignity as if he had been born to it, appointing officers, architects, guards, couriers, and an official called the King's Eye,* (possibly the head of the detective police).

* This officer is introduced in Aristophanes' comedy of 'The Acharnians.' He appears in a mask (as in a modern burlesque) with a single huge eye in the centre. He is brought to Athens by some envoys who have been at the court of Persia. Dicaeopolis (an honest farmer who is present at the reception) is indignant at their waste of time and the public money.

"*Envoy.*—We've brought you here a nobleman—Sham-artabas
By name, by rank and office the King's Eye.

"*Dicaep.*—God send a crow to peck it out, say I!
And yours th' ambassadors' into the bargain."

—FERRIS's Transl.

In carrying out his character, Cyrus ordered one of the children, the son of a Median of high rank, to be flogged for disobedience. The angry child went to the city and complained to his father, who in turn complained to the real king. Astyages ordered the despotic urchin to be brought into his presence. Unabashed, however, the boy justified himself; and this circumstance, together with a strong family resemblance, led to his recognition by the grandfather, who came at the truth by examining the herdsman and Harpagus. He now dissembled his wrath, pretended that he was glad the child had been saved, and invited Harpagus to send his son to be the companion of the young prince, and to come himself to dinner. After Harpagus had well feasted, Astyages asked him how he liked his entertainment; he said it was excellent. Upon this, a basket was shown to him containing the head, hands, and feet of his own son, on whose flesh he had been feasting. The father, with the dissimulation natural to the subjects of an Oriental despotism, observed that whatsoever the king did was right in his eyes. It is the very answer which the son of Ethelwold is said by William of Malmesbury to have made when King Edgar showed him his father's corpse, slain by him in the royal forest; the English chronicler having evidently borrowed from Herodotus.

Astyages now consulted the Magi (a caste of priests of whom we shall hear more hereafter) as to what was to be done. They said that they considered that Cyrus had ceased to be dangerous, since he had been king already in the children's play. So Astyages sent him away into Persia, to his real parents. Meanwhile

Harpagus nursed his revenge, till Cyrus was grown to man's estate, and then he felt his time was come. He sent a letter to the noble youth sewn up in the belly of a hare, bidding him put himself at once at the head of the Persians, and revolt from Astyages. This king—surely under some infatuation from heaven, says the historian—forgetting the deadly wrong which he had done Harpagus, sent him to suppress the revolt. He deserted to Cyrus, and the Medes were easily defeated. Thus Cyrus destroyed the great Median empire, and substituted that of the Persians—becoming, after the downfall of Croesus, master of all Asia. He treated his grandfather Astyages with all honour to the day of his death.

There was a religious as well as a political dissidence between the two nations. They both worshipped the elements and "all the host of heaven," and planetary deities; but the Persian national creed recognised both a good and an evil principle in nature, constantly at war, whom they called Ormuzd and Ahri-man. The Persians, according to Herodotus, eschewed images, temples, and altars, and sacrificed to the elemental deity on the tops of mountains. But he has evidently confused the Median worship with theirs. Their habits much resembled those of the old Germans, as described by Tacitus. They were originally a simple people, and compulsory education with them was limited to teaching their sons "to ride, to draw the bow, and speak the truth." Next after lying, they counted running in debt most disgraceful, since "he who is in debt must needs lie." Lepers were banished from society, as they were supposed to have sinned against the sun; even white pigeons being put under

"taboo" for a similar reason.* They were very much given to wine;† and discussed every subject of importance twice—first when they were drunk, and again when they were sober. As water was a sacred element, none might defile a river—a sanitary regulation in which we moderns would do well to follow them. The bodies of the dead presented a difficulty. They might not be buried, for the earth was sacred; or thrown into rivers, for water was sacred; or burnt, for fire was sacred. They were therefore exposed to be torn by birds and beasts—a fate of which the Greeks had the greatest horror. The Parsees of India, and the native Australians, dispose of their dead in much the same way. As a compromise, adopted from the Magi, a body might be buried when covered with wax to prevent its contact with the earth.

The Persians, when they had conquered the Medes, soon degenerated from their earlier simplicity, which is celebrated by Xenophon in his romance of the 'Education of Cyrus.'

When Cyrus, by the defeat of Croesus, had made himself master of Lydia, the Greek colonists on the Asiatic seaboard sent to him in alarm, and begged to be allowed to be his vassals on the same terms as they had been to Croesus. He answered them by a scornful parable: "There was a certain piper who piped on the

* So to this day, in India, all *white* animals are looked upon much in the way in which we ourselves regard albinos—a kind of unhealthy *luxus naturæ*.

† Their successors retain the taste. "It is quite appalling," says Sir H. Rawlinson, "to see the quantity of liquor which some of these toppers habitually consume, and they usually prefer spirits to wine."

sea-shore for the fish to come out, but they came not. Then he took a net and hauled out a great draught of them. The fish, in their agonies, began to caper. But he said, 'Cease to dance now, since ye would not dance when I piped to you.'"* This answer drove the Ionian Greeks to fortify their towns and send ambassadors to Sparta for assistance. Their envoy, however, disgusted the Spartans by wearing a purple robe and making a long speech—two things which they detested; and they voted not to send the succours, but despatched a fifty-oared ship to watch the proceedings of Cyrus. When this vessel reached the port of Phocæa, a herald was sent on to Sardis to warn Cyrus from the Spartans not to hurt any Greek city on pain of their displeasure. This caused Cyrus to inquire who these Spartans were, and how many in numbers, that they dared to send him such a message. When he was informed he said, "I am not afraid of people who have a place in their city where they meet to cheat each other and forswear themselves" (meaning the agora or market-place); "and if I live, the Spartans shall have troubles enough of their own, without troubling themselves about the Ionians."

Cyrus had other business on his hands at present than to punish the Greeks; he therefore went back to Ecbatana, leaving a strong garrison in Sardis. But while he was on his way he heard that one Pactyas had induced the Sardians to revolt, and was besieging the garrison in the citadel. Troops were sent to put down the revolt; Pactyas, however, did not wait for their arrival, but fled to Cyme, on which the Persian general demanded his extradition. The men of Cyme sent to

* This Eastern apologue may serve as an illustration of the parable in Matt. xi. 16.



ask advice at a neighbouring oracle of Apollo, and the answer came that Pactyas was to be given up. Some of the citizens, not satisfied with this answer, thought the envoys must have made a mistake, and sent again to remonstrate with the god, but the answer was repeated; whereupon Aristodicus, the principal envoy, went round the temple and cleared away all the nests of sparrows and other birds that he found there. While he was thus engaged, a voice came from the sanctuary,—“Unholy man, darest thou to tear my suppliants from my temple?” on which Aristodicus, by no means abashed, replied,—“O king, thou canst protect thine own suppliants, and yet thou orderest the Cymeans to surrender theirs.” “I do,” answered the god, “that you may the sooner perish; for it was in the naughtiness of your hearts that you came to consult me on such a matter.”* Eventually they sent Pactyas to Chios for safety; but the Chians gave him up to the Persians, even tearing him from the temple of Minerva; and Atarneus, a district opposite Lesbos, was paid them as the price of blood. But there was a curse on the produce of Atarneus for ever.

The Persians now proceeded to punish the revolted Lydians and Ionians, and Harpagus, the king-maker, who had deposed Astyages, forthwith beleaguered Phocæa. The inhabitants of this city, however, preferred exile to slavery; taking an oath never to

* The remarkable answer attributed here to the oracle may serve to illustrate the permission given to Balaam to go with the messengers of Balak. Even to the heathen mind, there were questions of conscience so clear, that to consult heaven specially in the matter was a mockery. [See the almost parallel case of Glaucus, ch. viii.]

return until a bar of iron, which they sank in the sea, should rise and float, they set sail, and, after a multitude of adventures, found a resting-place on the coast of Italy.

Most of the other towns on the coast were subdued after a gallant resistance, and the islanders gave themselves up. Then Harpagus turned inland against the Carians and Lycians. The Carians deserve notice as the reputed inventors of crests to helmets, and of heraldic devices. The Lycians were early advocates of the rights of women; naming men not after their fathers, as was usual, but after their mothers. The Lycians of Xanthus* made a desperate resistance. Finding they could not beat the Persians in the field, they made a great pile on which they burnt their wives and children, and all their valuables, and then sallied out and perished in battle to a man. Their example was imitated by Saguntum in Spain in the second Punic war.

While Harpagus was thus subduing the coast, Cyrus was pursuing his conquests in Upper Asia. He turned his arms against Labynetus, king of Babylon. This renowned city, says our historian, formed a vast square fifty-five miles in circuit. Its double walls were 340 feet high (nearly as high as St Vincent's rock at Bristol) and 85 feet thick. The measurements seem enormous, yet the great wall of China shows such works to be possible, when absolute power commands unlimited labour. The city itself was cut in two by the river Euphrates, the quays being fenced by walls with

* About thirty years ago the British Museum was enriched by some beautiful marbles brought from Xanthus by an expedition which explored Lycia under the conduct of Sir Charles Fellows.

water-gates for communication. One half contained the king's palace, the other the great sacred tower of Belus (Bel or Baal) with its external winding ascent. Babylon was in fact a fortified province rather than a city; it resembled Jeddo in Japan, in being a collection of country houses with small farms and gardens attached. It seems to have been the ideal of what a great city ought to be, especially in days of internal railroads. London, containing its millions, with its thin houses laterally squeezed together, or Paris, with its horizontal piles of flats, and no corresponding spaces, would have excited the horror of the ancients, who in some respects were more civilised than ourselves. Herodotus attributes the great engineering works about Babylon, to prevent the Euphrates from overflowing the country, chiefly to two queens, Semiramis* and Nitocris, between whom he places an interval of five generations. Of this latter he relates a striking anecdote.

"She built for herself a tomb above the most frequented gateway of the city, exactly over the gates, and engraved on it the following inscription: 'If any of the kings of Babylon who come after me shall be in need of money, let him open my tomb and take therefrom as much as he will; but unless he is in need, let him not open it, else will it be worse for him.' Now this tomb remained undisturbed until the kingdom fell to Darius. But he thought it absurd that this gateway should be made no use of—for it was not used, because one would have had to pass under the dead body as one

* This queen appears to have really reigned in conjunction with her husband. She is probably not the great queen known by the same name.

went out—and that when money was lying there idle, and calling out for some one to take it, he should not lay his hand on it. So he opened the tomb and found no money at all, but only the dead body, and these words written—‘If thou wert not the greediest of men, and shameless in thy greed, thou wouldst not have disturbed the resting-place of the dead.’”

Although the author notices most of the wonders of Babylon, he makes no mention of the hanging-gardens, which excited the astonishment of later writers. Nebuchadnezzar is said to have constructed them out of affection for a Median wife, that she might not be afflicted with a Swiss longing for her native mountain scenery.*

Having defeated the Babylonians in battle, Cyrus drove them inside their huge walls. There they laughed at his efforts, having good store of provisions for many years. But their enemy proved himself as good an engineer as any of their queens, historical or fabulous. Taking advantage of reservoirs previously existing, he turned off by a canal the waters of the Euphrates, and the Persians walked into the city dry-shod by the bed of the river, even the water-gates having been left open by incomprehensible carelessness. Those who were in the centre of the city, says Herodotus, were still feasting, dancing, and revelling, after the Persians had entered. It is the night described in the Book of Daniel, when the terrible “handwriting” was seen upon the wall.†

The Babylonians were a luxurious people. Their

* So a great fox-hunter, who could not find it in his heart to leave England, is said to have turned his conservatory into a little Italy for his delicate wife.

† The names of the Eastern kings are so variously given,

full dress was a long linen tunic, with a woollen robe over it, and a short white cloak or cape over the shoulder. Though they wore their hair long, they swathed their heads in turbans, and perfumed themselves all over. Each citizen carried his walking-staff, carved at the top with the likeness of some natural object—such as an apple, a rose, a lily, or an eagle—and had also his private signet. Of these seals (which are hollow cylinders) great numbers have been found during the late explorations, and brought to Europe.*

Herodotus records one of their customs, which, whether in jest or earnest, he declares to be the wisest he ever heard of. This was their wife-auction, by which they managed to find husbands for all their young women. The greatest beauty was put up first, and knocked down to the highest bidder; then the next in the order of comeliness—and so on to the damsel who was equidistant between beauty and plainness, who was given away gratis. Then the least plain was put up, and knocked down to the gallant who would marry her for the smallest consideration,—and so on till even the plainest was got rid of to some cynical worthy who decidedly

that it is almost impossible to identify them either in sacred or profane history. The Labynetus of Herodotus is Nabonidus, or Nabonadius, in other writers. The “Belshazzar” whom Daniel calls “king” was probably his son, associated with him in the government. His name appears in inscriptions as Bilshar-uzur. We know from other authorities that Labynetus himself was not in the city at its capture.—See Rawlinson’s *Herodotus*, i. 524, &c.

* They are commonly of some composition, but occasionally have been found in amethyst, cornelian, agate, &c.—Layard’s *Nineveh and Babylon*, 602, &c.

preferred lucre to looks. By transferring to the scale of the ill-favoured the prices paid for the fair, beauty was made to endow ugliness, and the rich man's taste was the poor man's gain. The Babylonian marriage-market might perhaps be advantageously adopted in some modern countries where marriage is still made a commercial matter. It at least possesses the merit of honesty and openness, and tends to a fair distribution of the gifts of fortune.

Another Babylonian custom, of which Herodotus strongly approves, was that of employing no professional physicians, but placing the sick in the gate of the city, that they might get advice respecting the treatment of their diseases from every passer-by, and thus profit by the experience of those who had been afflicted in the same way as themselves. Whatever may be thought of the absence of regular practitioners, the alternative would certainly seem one of the exceptional cases where wisdom is not found in a multitude of counsellors.

Having annexed this great and rich province to his dominions, Cyrus seems to have been intoxicated with success, or, in our author's view, to have filled up the measure of his prosperity, which now began to run over in insolent self-confidence. He made an expedition against the Massagetæ or Greater Goths, who lived in the steppes near the Caspian Sea, and were ruled by an Amazonian widow named Tomyris. While encamping against her, Cyrus dreamed that Darius, the son of Hystaspes, a young noble of the royal house of Persia, appeared to him with wings on his shoulders (like some of the Assyrian gods whose figures he must have seen), with one of which he overshadowed

Asia and the other Europe. This portended his fall, and the ultimate accession of Darius. At first he gained a partial advantage by the stratagem of leaving a camp stored with wine to be plundered by the water-drinking Massagetæ, and then returning and massacring them in their sleep. This was the shrewd advice of Cræsus the Lydian, whom Cyrus had taken with him on the expedition. Among the prisoners taken was the son of the Massagetan queen. Cyrus released him from his bonds at his own request ; but the youth, unable to bear his disgrace, only took advantage of his liberty to kill himself. At length the invaders were forced to a general action—the fiercest, says Herodotus, ever fought between barbarian armies. The Persians were completely defeated, and Cyrus himself was slain, after a reign of twenty-nine years. Queen Tomyris, exasperated by the treacherous slaughter of her army and the death of her son, had threatened to give the bloodthirsty invader his fill of blood ; she kept her word by filling a skin with it, and plunging into it his severed head.

Such is the account which Herodotus gives of the death of the great Eastern conqueror, so famous both in sacred and profane history. He confesses that he has only chosen one legend out of many. There is little doubt, however, that he died in battle. But the Persian poets assigned a very different fate to their national hero, Kai Khusru, as his name stands in their language. They will not allow that he died at all. When he grew old, they say, he one day took leave of his attendants on the banks of a pleasant stream, and was seen no more. But, as in the case of Arthur and Barbarossa, and all the great favourites of a nation,

they looked forward to his coming again, more powerful and glorious than ever.

These Massagetæ, says our author, resembled the Scythians, but could fight on foot as well as on horseback, their favourite weapon being, as with the Anglo-Saxons, a battle-axe or bill. They had the peculiar custom of sacrificing their old people, and then feasting on them, and natural death was considered a misfortune. This curious people, whose descendants may be now in northern or western Europe, knew nothing of tillage, and lived on flesh, fish, and milk. Their only deity, known to Herodotus, was the Sun. To him they sacrificed the horse, with the notion that it was right to bestow the swiftest of creatures on the swiftest of gods. The Persians also attached a certain sanctity to some breeds of horses, and the Teutonic conquerors of Britain bore a horse as their cognisance. Some say that Hengist and Horsa were not names of men, but only represented a people using this national symbol. This rude heraldry of our northern ancestors—or conquerors—may still be traced in the “White Horse” cut out on the chalk-hills in more than one place on our Berkshire and Wiltshire downs.

CHAPTER III

EGYPT.


"In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon."

—TENNYSON, "Lotos-Eaters."

Of all the nine books of Herodotus, the second, which bears the name of the Muse "Euterpe," is incomparably the one of deepest interest to the modern reader, as giving glimpses, such as are found nowhere else but in Scripture, of the infancy of the human race, and as propounding important scientific problems, which can, if ever, only find their solution in remote futurity. It is, moreover, the portion of his work which is most strongly stamped with the characteristics of the author's personality. It must ever be borne in mind that Herodotus is not a historian in the modern sense of the term. He is the representative writer of a class who stand midway between poetical annalists like Homer and critical historians like Thucydides. They wrote their *Iliads* in prose, making no sharp distinction between truth and fiction. They did not yet look upon the verification of their facts as a duty, but jotted down all that they heard and saw, an instinctive love of truth alone suggesting occasional scepticism as to very extraordinary

marvels, so that the modern reader may just observe the dawning of the critical spirit. Predominantly in his Egypt, Herodotus appears as the traveller and archæologist; nor is he fairly afloat on the current of history until he launches himself into the narrative of the Persian invasions of Greece, of the circumstances of which he had more immediate knowledge—if not as an eyewitness, yet from those who had themselves been eyewitnesses.

Egypt has been in all ages the land of wonders, from the time when its “magicians” found their enchantments fail before the mightier Power which was with Moses, to that when Napoleon told his soldiers that from the top of the Pyramids four thousand years looked down on their struggle with the Mamelukes,—and to our own day, when a French engineer repeats the feat of the old native kings and the Greek Ptolemies, in marrying by a canal the Red Sea to the Mediterranean; an achievement which will make the name of Lesseps immortal, if the canal can only be kept clear of sand. The civilisation of Egypt is older than time—or at least, than its records. Her kings were counted wholesale—not by individuals, but by dynasties, of which there were said to have been thirty-one, exclusive of gods and heroes. She was the mother of the arts to Greece, as Greece has been to us. Her monuments are nearly as vast and as seemingly indestructible as the everlasting hills themselves, and the study of her mere remnants seems to present a field as inexhaustible as that of nature. No wonder that Herodotus willingly lingered in this interesting country. He was no holiday traveller, but one all ears and eyes, not likely to let any fact or



object escape him through carelessness or want of curiosity.

The Egyptians were wont to boast that they were the oldest people in the world; but our author says that their king Psammetichus once put this to the proof, and decided against them. Two infants were kept carefully apart from human society, their attendants being forbidden to utter a word before them. Under these circumstances women as nurses were out of the question, and they were suckled by goats. [There was indeed a Greek version of the legend, which said that the children were nursed by women—with their tongues cut out.] One day, when about two years old, they came to their keeper, stretching out their hands, and calling "Bekkos! bekkos!" This being Phrygian for "bread," the palm of antiquity was adjudged to the Phrygians. The test was scarcely trustworthy, for probably enough the cry was only an imitation of the bleat of the goats. It has indeed been claimed by etymologists as the Sanscrit root "*pac*," whence our word "cook" is said to be derived. The Germans, again, recognise in it their own "*bakken*" = bake.*

According to the priests, who were Herodotus's chief informants, the whole country except the district of Thebes, seven days' sail up the Nile from the sea, was originally a swamp. To the truth of this our author was ready to testify, as the whole Delta (called so from the shape of the Greek letter Δ, our D) appeared to him to be "the gift of the river." This formation certainly required time, but he considered that the Nile was so

* Englishmen have suggested that it may have been a feeble attempt to call for "breakfast."

energetic, that in ten thousand years (which is, after all, a very moderate geological period) it might even deposit alluvial soil enough to fill up the Arabian gulf of the Red Sea. The priests appear to have given him very good data for supplementing his own observations on the physical phenomena of the country; and in these details he evinces a patient investigation of facts which would do credit to any age, however scientific. He only becomes fanciful when he begins to speculate on the unknown. With respect to the causes of the annual inundations of the Nile, he could, naturally enough, get no trustworthy information. It struck him as particularly strange that the Nile, unlike other rivers, should begin to rise with the summer solstice, and be in a state of flood for a hundred days afterwards. Certain Greeks who affected a reputation for science endeavoured to account for the phenomenon in three ways. The third, which appeared to Herodotus the least plausible explanation, was, that the Nile was swollen by melting snows, though it flows through the torrid land of the Ethiopians into Egypt—which seemed to him a contradiction. Yet this theory was so near the actual truth, that the inundations are caused by the summer rains in the highlands of Abyssinia and on the equatorial table-land of Africa. That Herodotus had seen an inundation of the river is tolerably certain, from his description of the appearance of the country at such times. He speaks of the towns and villages standing out of the water “like the islands in the *Ægean Sea* ;” a graphic picture, of which modern travellers have recognised the truth. Adopting neither of the theories which had been advanced, Herodotus modestly propounds one of his own, which is curious, but of no

scientific value, as resting on false cosmographical data.

As to the sources of the Nile, he says that he never met with but one person who professed to know anything about them. This was the registrar of the treasury of Minerva at Saïs; but when he began to talk about two conical hills—"called Krophî and Mophî"—between Syene and Elephantinè (below the cataracts), Herodotus thought he could hardly be quite serious. Between those hills, said his informant, lay the fountains of the Nile, of unfathomable depth. Half the water ran to Egypt, the other half to Ethiopia. Psammetichus had tried to sound them with a rope many thousand fathoms in length, but there were such strong eddies in the water that the bottom of the spring could never be reached. Herodotus himself went up the Nile as far as Elephantinè—that is, did not get beyond the first cataract; and though he learnt much by inquiry as to the country generally, he could throw no additional light on the great question. But a story reached him originally derived from certain Nasamonians—a people inhabiting the edge of the desert—that once on a time certain "wild young men," sons of their chiefs, took it into their heads to draw lots which of them should go and explore the desert of Libya, and try to get farther than any one had gone before. Five of their number set out, well supplied with food and water, and passed first through the inhabited region, then through a country tenanted only by wild beasts, and then entered the desert, taking a direction from east to west. After proceeding for many days over a sandy waste, they came at last to a plain where

they found fruit-trees, and began to pluck the fruit. While they were doing so, certain very small men came upon them and took them prisoners. The Nasamonians could not understand them, nor make themselves understood. They were led by them across vast marshes, and at last came to a town where all the inhabitants were black dwarfs like their captors. A great river flowed by the town from west to east, abounding in crocodiles. And all the people in the town were wizards. It was added that the explorers returned in safety from their perilous journey. If the Bushmen now surviving at the Cape, and formerly more extensively spread over Africa, were a black race, which they are not, we might suppose them to be the descendants of the little men spoken of by Herodotus. Their colour may, however, have been modified by the temperate climate of South Africa in the course of long ages. The tribe of Dokos, in the south-west of Abyssinia, are dwarfish, and answer very nearly to Herodotus's description. Herodotus was inclined to identify the Nile with the river flowing by the mysterious city.*

It is strange that the oldest geographical problem in the world should be a problem still, though now probably in the course of solution. The nearest approach to the truth appears to have been made by the Alexandrian geographer, Ptolemy, who had heard of certain lakes as the sources of the Nile, and placed them some ten degrees south of the equator. The question slumbered through the middle ages, and one affluent after another was looked upon as the true Nile, till

* It was more probably, as Mr Rawlinson and Mr Blakesley both think, the Niger, and the city may have been Timbuctoo.

Bruce was for some time supposed to have set the question at rest in the eighteenth century, by the discovery of the source of the Blue River. Quite of late years it was agreed again that the White River was the main branch; and in 1857 Captain Speke, setting out from Zanzibar, discovered the Victoria Lake, which is now the farthest authenticated source in an easterly direction, while Sir Samuel Baker's Albert Lake is the farthest authenticated source in a westerly. Up to this time Speke and his companion Major Grant are the only men who have actually crossed Africa from south-east to north, and as yet the honours of discovery must be supposed to rest with them.

In treating of the wonders of Egypt, Herodotus certainly exaggerates on some points from love of paradox, as when he says that as the Nile differs from all other rivers in its nature, so the Egyptians differ from all other men in their habits, the men doing what is usually considered as women's work, and the women men's work; for in this he is refuted by the Egyptian paintings, which represent each sex as usually engaged in its proper occupation. But a Greek must have been much struck with the comparative freedom of the Egyptian women, so unlike the life of the Hellenic "lady's bower," or the Asiatic harem. Sophocles, in his 'Œdipus at Colonus,' has made a beautiful application of this recorded contrast to the helpful piety of the daughters and the selfish luxury of the sons of the blind hero, which would seem to show that he wrote the play fresh from the perusal of his friend's Egypt.

Our author makes the observation that the Egyptians were the first nation who, holding the soul to be immor-

tal, asserted its migration after death through the whole round of created beings, till it lived again in another man, which occupied a cycle of three thousand years. This doctrine of a "circle of necessity" was held alike by Buddhists, Druids, and—if Josephus may be trusted—by the sect of the Pharisees among the Jews. But this Egyptian doctrine, which is profusely illustrated on the tombs, suffered the wicked only to descend into animals, while the good passed at once into a state of happiness. A striking custom which Herodotus describes would seem to show that to them, as to the Greeks, the future existence was not a cheering prospect.

"In the social banquets of the rich, as soon as the feast is ended, a man carries round a wooden figure of a corpse in its coffin, graven and painted so as to resemble the reality as nearly as possible, from one to two cubits long. And as he shows it to each of the guests, he says, "Look on this, and drink, and be merry; for when thou art dead, such shalt thou be."

The "skeleton at the banquet" has pointed many a moral for ancient and modern writers. St Paul may have had it in mind when he quoted as the motto of the Sadducee, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," as well as Shakespeare, when he makes his Hamlet moralise over Yorick's skull—"Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come."

Herodotus considers that the names of the gods came to Greece from Egypt, with the exception of Poseidon (Neptune), Castor and Pollux, Here (Juno), Hestia, Themis, the Graces and the Nereids. All these the Greeks were said to have inherited from the Pelasgians, with the exception of the sea-god Posei-

don, with whom they became acquainted through the Libyans. The Egyptians, unlike the Greeks, paid no honour to heroes or demigods; for their god Osiris (who corresponded to Bacchus) appeared on earth only as a manifestation or Avatar of Deity. Amongst the mythological marvels of the Egyptians, Herodotus relates that they accounted cows as sacred to Isis, the moon-goddess, represented with horns, and objected to kill them as food—a practice which finds its parallel in India at the present day. The sacredness of animals generally, in Egypt, struck our traveller forcibly. For each species there were certain appointed guardians, who tended and fed them, and the office was hereditary. To kill one of these sacred animals was a capital offence, unless done accidentally, in which case a fine was inflicted; but to kill an ibis or a hawk was death without reprieve. Cats were so much respected that, in case of a fire occurring, the Egyptians would let the house be burnt before their eyes, all their attention being given to saving the cats; which, however, they usually found impossible, as the animals (no doubt in terror at the well-meant efforts of their friends) had a trick of jumping into the flames. If they died, nevertheless, it was thought to be a terrible misfortune. When a cat died a natural death, all the inmates of a house went into mourning by shaving their eyebrows, and they shaved their heads and their whole bodies when a dog died. The dead cats were embalmed, and their mummies stored in the sacred city of Bubastis; but the dogs were buried in their own cities, as were also the ichneumons. The hawks and shrew-mice were conveyed to Buto, and the ibises to Hermopolis. It would seem by this that the animals about whose

funerals so much trouble was taken were more sacred than the rest.* The crocodile, of which Herodotus gives a description, perhaps as fairly accurate as could be expected from an ordinary observer, was accounted sacred by some of the Egyptians; for instance, by the people about Thebes, and those about Lake Mœris. In each of these places a tame crocodile was kept, who wore ear-rings (or rather rings in the corresponding holes) of glass or gold, and bracelets on his fore-paws. Every day he had his ration of bread and meat, and when he died he was buried in a consecrated vault. But the people of Elephantine, so far from canonising these animals, thought them tolerable eating.

Herodotus gives a native receipt for catching crocodiles. Bait a hook with a chine of pork, and let it float to about the middle of the stream. Let a confederate hold a living pig on the bank, and belabour him lustily. The crocodile hears the pig squeak, and, making for him, encounters the pork, which he swallows. When the men on shore have drawn him to land, plug his eyes with mud; after that, it is very easy to kill him. This latter item of the receipt has a strong affinity to an old precept about "putting salt on a bird's tail." A very similar mode of capture (with this exception) is practised by the natives now. The name "crocodilos," as the author observes, is Ionic Greek for "lizard;" the Egyptians themselves calling the animal "champsæ."† He is somewhat mistaken in his

* Lane says that the modern Egyptians are remarkably kind to animals. On one occasion a lady buried a favourite dog with all the honours due to a good Mussulman, and houseless cats are fed at the expense of the Cadi of the district.

† Apparently an attempt to write the name *mesah*, still to be

account of the hippopotamus, no specimen of which he appears to have seen. He gives it the hoof of an ox, and the mane and neigh of a horse.

The sacred bird called the phoenix Herodotus confesses he never saw except in pictures. Indeed it was rare in Egypt, for it came but once in five hundred years, when the old phoenix died. According to the pictures, it was like an eagle, with plumage partly red and partly golden. The bird was said to come from Arabia, bringing the body of his father enclosed in a ball of myrrh, that he might bury it in the temple of the Sun. Our author did not seem to be acquainted with that other version of the phoenix fable, according to which it returned from the east after a stated period to burn itself in frankincense, and was again resuscitated. The phoenix was an emblem of the soul and its supposed migrations, and its journey to the east typified the constant aspiration of the soul towards the sun. Its period of migration referred to a solar cycle in the Egyptian calendar. Pliny says that the name was derived from a species of palm in Lower Egypt, which dies down to the root and then is renovated. Ovid makes the bird build its nest on a palm. In hieroglyphic language the palm-bough is the sign of the year.

Amongst other wonders, our author had heard of winged serpents, which flew across from Arabia, and was induced to undertake a journey to the country whence they came, where he says he saw some of their bones. The ibises were said to destroy them as they flew, which caused this bird to be held in great honour by the Egyptians. We are now in possession of the traced in the Arabic *tensah*.—See Sir G. Wilkinson's note, Rawlinson, ii. 116.

probable key to this enigmatical story, which illustrates both the simple faith and painstaking of our author, and also the manner in which myths grow out of the use of words. When scorpions or snakes appear in large numbers in the houses in Upper Egypt, they are supposed to be brought by the wind, and to all such objects an Arabic word is applied which signifies to fly. Herodotus doubtless saw pictures of a winged serpent attacked by the ibis, but this bird typified the god Osiris in the white robes of his purity, and the winged serpent probably the Evil principle. The ibis, however, is said to destroy snakes. His mention of the harmless horned snakes at Thebes, which were considered sacred, and buried in the temple, may suggest the prolific subject of primeval serpent-worship.

The description which Herodotus gives of the manners and customs of the Egyptians stamps them as a highly civilised people. In the reverence paid by young men to their elders, he considered that they set a good example to the Greeks. In the medical profession they recognised a minute division of labour, some being oculists, others dentists, and so forth.* Those who embalmed the dead (the "physicians" of the book of Genesis) formed a profession of themselves. He describes at length three methods of embalming (they had really many more), which were adopted in order to suit the means of their customers, as modern undertakers provide for funerals at different tariffs. Amongst other local peculiarities, Herodotus notices the lotus-eaters of the marsh-lands, who remind us of those described by Homer in the voyage of

* "O virgin, daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines."—Jer. xli. 11.

Ulysses. But these latter—if they are to be identified at all—are to be recognised rather in the lotus-eating tribe whom our author mentions in a subsequent book as existing on the coast of Africa. Their lotus was probably a kind of jujube (*Zizyphus napeca*). The Egyptian lotus was a kind of water-lily, the centre of whose blossom was dried, crushed, and eaten, as also its round root. The seeds of another water-lily, whose blossoms were like a rose, were also eaten, as well as the lower stems of the byblus or papyrus, whose leaves were used for paper and other purposes. The mosquitoes were as great a nuisance in Egypt formerly as now. Herodotus says that some of the natives, to avoid them, slept on towers exposed to the wind; but in the marshes each man had a net, which served the double purpose of catching fish by day and acting as a mosquito-curtain at night.

For the early history of the country Herodotus had to depend upon his informants, who were usually the priests, especially those of Heliopolis—the Greek name by which he knew the oldest capital of Egypt, *Hî-n-re*, the On or Aon of the Hebrew Scriptures—the “City of the Sun.”* The college of priests there was in fact the university of Egypt; and whatever faith we may place in their historical records, their proficiency in mathematics and astronomy was very considerable indeed. They asserted that the first

* The “Aven” of Ezek. xxx. 17; translated into the Hebrew *Beth-shemesh*—“House of the Sun”—Jer. xliii. 18. The silt of the Nile has now covered most of its monuments and buildings, but its massive walls may still be traced, and a solitary granite obelisk, said to be near 4000 years old, marks what was the entrance to the temple of the Sun.

kings of Egypt were gods, "who dwelt upon earth with men." The last of this divine dynasty was Horus, son of Osiris—whom the Greeks identified with Apollo. The sufferings and death of Osiris were the great mystery of the Egyptian creed. Herodotus had seen his burial-place at Sais, and knew the mysterious rites with which, under cover of night, these sufferings were commemorated. But he "will by no means speak of them," or even mention the god by name. Either the priests had enjoined secrecy upon him as the price of their information; or perhaps, being himself initiated in the Greek Mysteries, he had a scrupulous reverence for those of Egypt. Osiris was the great principle of Good, who slew his brother Typhon, the representative of Evil; and is pictured in the hieroglyphic paintings as the great judge of the dead. The first king of human race was Mén, or Menes, the founder of Memphis, who began a line of three hundred and thirty monarchs (including one queen), whose names were read off to Herodotus from a roll of papyrus. Eighteen were said to be Ethiopians. Of most of these kings the priests professed to know little more than the names; but Moeris, the last of them, left his name to a large artificial lake, or reservoir, near the "City of Crocodiles," from which water was conveyed to all parts of the neighbourhood. His successor, Sesostris, is said to have conquered all Asia, and even to have subdued Scythia and Thrace, in Europe, marking the limits of his conquests by pillars—two of which, in Palestine, Herodotus declares that he himself saw.* Sesostris, after his return from his


* There is little doubt that these are the tablets still to be seen near Beyrout.

conquests, met with somewhat too warm a welcome from his brother, whom he had left viceroy of Egypt. He invited the hero and his family to a banquet, heaped wood all round the building, and set fire to it. Sesostris only escaped by sacrificing (by the mother's advice) two of his six sons, whose bodies he used to bridge the circle of flame. Having inflicted condign punishment on his brother, he then proceeded to utilise the vast multitudes of captives whom he had brought with him. By the employment of this forced labour he changed the face of Egypt, completely intersecting it with canals, and filling it with public buildings of unparalleled magnificence. The second king after Sesostris bore a Greek name, but must be regarded as a very apocryphal personage—Proteus, who was said to have entertained at his court no less famous a visitor than Helen, the heroine of the Trojan war. For the Egyptian priests had their version, too, of that wondrous Tale. According to them, the Spartan princess was driven by stress of weather to Egypt on her forced elopement with Paris, while Troy was besieged by the Greeks, in the belief that she was there. King Proteus, when he heard the story, gave Helen refuge, but dismissed Paris at once with disgrace. Herodotus accuses Homer of knowing this legend, which was a more probable version of the story than his own, and suppressing it for poetical purposes, since he speaks of the long wanderings of Helen, and of Menelaus's visit to Egypt. The priests told him that their predecessors had the story from Menelaus himself, who went to Egypt to fetch Helen, when he found, after the capture of Troy, that she was not there. Herodotus himself saw in the sacred precincts at Memphis a temple to "Venus the

Foreigner," whom his Greek patriotism at once identified with Helen.

A story told at considerable length by Herodotus of the next king, Rhampsinitus, is highly characteristic, showing that sympathy of the Greek mind for clever rascality which recalls Homer's manifest enjoyment of the wily tricks of Ulysses in the 'Odyssey.' The story of "The Treasury of Rhampsinitus," which has been borrowed also by the Italian novelists, reads as if it were taken from the 'Arabian Nights.'


King Rhampsinitus, having vast treasure of silver, built for its safe keeping a chamber of hewn stone, one of whose walls formed also the outer wall of his palace. His architect, however, having designs on the treasure, built a stone into the wall, which even one man who knew the secret could easily displace. He did not live long enough to carry out his views, but on his deathbed explained the contrivance to his two sons, for whose sake, he said, he had devised it, that they might live as rich men, since the secret would make them virtual chancellors of the royal exchequer through their lives. After his death, the sons profited by his instructions to remove a considerable sum. The king, when next he came to visit the room, missed his money, finding it standing at a lower level in the vessels. This happened again and again, though the seals and fastenings of the room were as secure as ever. At last he set a man-trap inside. When the thieves next made their usual visit, one of them found himself suddenly caught. Seeing no hope of escape, he called to his brother to come and cut off his head, to prevent his being recognised. The brother obeyed; and, after replacing the stone, made his way home with the head. When the king



entered at day-break, he greatly marvelled to see a headless trunk in the gin, while the building seemed still to be fast closed all round. To find out to whom the body belonged, he ordered it to be hung outside the palace-wall, and set a guard to watch, and bring before him any persons they might observe lamenting over it. The mother of the dead man, hearing of this desecration of a corpse that should have been a mummy, told her surviving son that unless he contrived to rescue it, she would go and tell the king that he was the robber. Wearied with her continual reproaches, at last the brother filled some skins with wine, loaded them on asses, and drove them by the place where the guards were watching the dead body. Then he slyly untied the necks of some of the skins. The wine of course began to run out, upon which he fell to wailing and beating his head, as if distracted, and not knowing to which donkey he should run first to stanch the wine. This highly amused the guards, who ran eagerly to catch the wine in all the vessels they could lay hands on. Then the driver pretended to get into a passion, and abused them, upon which they did their best to quiet him. At last, appearing to be put in good-humour again by their raillery, he gave them one of the skins to drink. They invited him to help them with the drinking, as they had helped him in putting the skins in order. As the wine went round, all got more and more friendly, till they broached another skin, and at last the guards all got so drunk that they went to sleep on the spot. In the dead of the night the thief took down the body of his brother, laid it upon the asses, and made off, having first remained long enough to shave off the right whiskers of each of the men,—

which was considered a deadly insult. When the king heard of this, he was more vexed than ever, and determined to find out the thief at any cost. He bade his daughter keep open house for all comers, and promise to marry the man who would tell her most to her satisfaction the cleverest and wickedest thing he had ever done. If any one told her the story of the robbery, she was to lay hold of him. But the thief was not to be thus outwitted. He procured a dead man's arm, put it under his dress, and went to call on the princess. When she put the question, he answered at once that the wickedest thing he had ever done was cutting off his brother's head in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk, and carrying off his body. The princess made a grasp at him, but in the darkness he left the arm of the corpse in her hand and fled. But now the king was overwhelmed with astonishment and admiration for the man's cleverness, and made a proclamation of free pardon and a rich reward, if the thief would declare himself. He boldly came forward, and Rhampsinitus gave him his daughter in marriage. "The Egyptians," he said, "are the wisest of men, and thou art the wisest of the Egyptians."

Till the death of Rhampsinitus, Egypt enjoyed prosperity. Cheops, who succeeded him, and who built the Great Pyramid, is said to have shut up all the temples, that his people might do nothing but work for him; and he kept a hundred thousand labouring at a time, who were relieved every three months. It took ten years to make the causeway (of which traces still remain) for the conveyance of stones, and another twenty to build the Pyramid itself. The next kings,



Chephren and Mycerinus (Mencheres), likewise built pyramids, but on a smaller scale. The memory of Cheops and Chephren, in consequence of their oppressions, became so odious to the Egyptians, that they would not even mention their names; but upon Mycerinus, though he was just and merciful, there fell the punishment due for their sins. First he lost his only daughter, and then an oracle told him that he had but six years to live. He expostulated with the oracle, saying it was hard that he who was a good and righteous king should die early, while his father and uncle, who were so impious, lived long. The oracle answered—"For that very reason thou must die, for Egypt was destined to suffer ill for one hundred and fifty years, and thou hinderest the doom from being fulfilled." On this Mycerinus, finding it useless to be virtuous, determined to outwit the gods; so he lighted lamps at nightfall, and turned all the nights into days, and enjoyed them, as well as the days, in feasting in all pleasant places. Thus he lived twelve years in the space of six, making his six years one long day of continuous revel. The story of Mycerinus has been very happily treated in one of Matthew Arnold's earliest poems.*

"I will unfold my sentence and my crime;
 My crime, that rapt in reverential awe,
 I sate obedient, in the fiery prime
 Of youth, self-governed, at the feet of Law,
 Ennobling this dull pomp, the life of kings,
 With contemplation of diviner things.

* Its moral—if it has any—may be found in Moore's song,—

"And the best of all ways
 To lengthen our days,
 Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear."

“ My father loved injustice, and lived long ;
Crowned with grey hairs he died, and full of sway.
I loved the good he scorned, and hated wrong ;
The gods declare my recompense to-day.
I looked for life more lasting, rule more high—
And when six years are measured, lo, I die ! ”

After him came a blind king named Anysis, during whose reign Egypt was invaded by the Ethiopians, who lorded it over the country for fifty years. He was succeeded by Sethos, a priest of Vulcan, who oppressed the warrior caste, so that they refused to serve him when Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, invaded the country. But a vision in the sanctuary bid him be of good cheer ; and when he went out to the frontier with an army of citizens, trusting in divine aid, a number of field-mice came in the night and gnawed the bow-strings, quivers, and shield-straps of the enemy, so that the Egyptians easily defeated them. Such is the dim tradition which reached the historian of the mysterious destruction of the Assyrian host recorded in the Scriptures. The mouse, according to some interpreters of hieroglyphic language, was the symbol of destruction. Thus far Herodotus had derived his information as to early Egyptian history entirely from the priests. He computed that the reigns of these kings, as given him, would require eleven thousand three hundred and forty years.


A revolution seemed to have occurred after the death of Sethos, by which twelve provincial kings, like those of the Saxon Heptarchy, reigned at once. Their great work was a labyrinth near Lake Mœris, which struck Herodotus as one of the wonders of the world—more wonderful even than the Pyramids themselves. One of the twelve, Psammetichus, at length managed to

depose the rest by the aid of Greek mercenaries. His son, Necho (Pharaoh Necho), is credited by Herodotus with the first attempt to construct the canal to the Red Sea, which was afterwards finished by Darius Hystaspes. The canal, however, was more probably begun by Sesostris (Rameses II.), and there appears to be evidence that it was choked by sand (which is still the difficulty with modern engineers), and reopened many times — by the Ptolemies, for instance, and the Arabs. Necho is mentioned in Scripture as having defeated and slain King Josiah at Megiddo on his way to attack the Assyrians. Herodotus briefly notices the victory, but calls the place Magdolus, after which he says that Necho took the city of Cadytis, supposed to be either Jerusalem or Gaza. In a subsequent expedition, which Herodotus does not mention, he himself was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and lost all his conquests. He was succeeded by his son Psammis, and his grandson Apries (the Pharaoh-Hophra of Jeremiah). The latter had a long and prosperous reign; but failing in an attack on the Greek city of Cyrene, his army revolted from him, and chose Amasis, an officer who had been sent to reason with them, for their king. Apries on this armed his Greek mercenaries, amounting to thirty thousand men, and went to meet the revolted Egyptians. In the battle which ensued he was defeated and taken prisoner by Amasis, who finally gave him up to his former subjects, with whom he was unpopular, and they strangled him. Amasis was a coarse but humorous character, rather proud than otherwise of his low origin. Finding that his subjects despised him for it, he broke up a golden foot-bath, and made of it an image of one of the gods,

which the Egyptians proceeded to worship. He then told them what it was made of, adding that "his own fortune had been that of the foot-pan;" thus anticipating the adage of Burns—

"The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."

When his courtiers reproved his undignified revels in his hours of relaxation, whereas none could complain of his inattention to business, he met them with the proverb, now common to most languages, that a bow becomes useless if not sometimes unstrung. His habits were certainly open to remark. To find money for his pleasures before he came to the throne, he occasionally took to highway robbery. The oracular shrines were the police-offices of those times, and Amasis, like other thieves, was cited in such cases before the nearest oracle. Some of them would acquit, others find him guilty. When he became king, he honoured the oracles which had detected him very highly, but the others he despised. But he was a great king, in spite of his failings; and Egypt is said to have prospered more under him than under any of his predecessors. One of his laws was, that every man should appear once a-year before the governor of his department, and prove, on pain of death, that he was getting an honest livelihood. Herodotus says that Solon borrowed this law from the Egyptians, and that it was in force at Athens up to his own days. If this be true, it fell into disuse soon after his time, as the Athenians enjoyed a reputation above all nations in the world for "gracefully going idle." We may at least join in his remark, that this ordinance of Amasis



was "a most excellent custom," towards which our modern civilisation is making timid approaches. We shall hear of this king again in connection with Polycrates, the despot of Samos.

The account which Herodotus here gives of the kings of Egypt, however interesting and entertaining, must be read with the full understanding that its value in a historical point of view is about the same as that of Livy's popular account of the early kings of Rome. He was unacquainted with the Egyptian language, and though the priests may not have purposely imposed upon him, he had to depend on the anecdotes which came to him through the medium of the caste of dragomans who were settled at Memphis. In consequence of this, the consecutiveness and general symmetry of his account only serves to conceal some palpable misstatements. Perhaps the greatest is that which makes the builders of the Pyramids later in time than the builders of the temples and other monuments. Modern investigations have tended to give great weight to the authority of a native chronicler, spoken of with much respect by early Christian writers, but who afterwards fell into disrepute—Manetho, the high priest in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus. His record is utterly fatal to the main facts of the account given by Herodotus. After dynasties of gods and heroes which reigned more than sixteen thousand years, he brings us to the builders of the Pyramids, whom Herodotus places at a late period of his history, perhaps because his Greek informants first became acquainted with the monuments at Memphis itself. He was probably furnished with two distinct lists of kings, both to a great extent mythical, which he took to be separate and

successive dynasties. Cheops is almost certainly identical with Menes, the first human king of Herodotus, in whose time was effected the canalisation of the Delta. He is the traditional builder of the Great Pyramid, and Chemmis (the Sun) appears as one of his titles, at once connecting him with the sun-worship. The Pyramids are supposed to have been built before the time of Abraham, with the Pharaoh of whose times Achthoes of the 11th dynasty has been identified. The name Pharaoh itself continues the title assumed by Cheops, in its meaning of "children of the sun."

The Mycerinus of Herodotus is found to resolve himself into two kings, the Mencheres who built the Pyramids, and another much later king, of whom the story of turning night into day is told; a legend which may have originated in the torch-light festival of Osiris and Isis. Sesostris also resolves himself into two kings—Sethos, the great engineer and builder, and Rameses II., the great conqueror whose victories are recorded in the temples at Karnak and Luxor, and whose fallen statue at Luxor is the largest in the world. After him came Menephtes or Amenonoph, who has been identified with the Pharaoh of Exodus. The Shishak of Scripture has been confounded with Sesostris, but he came far too late, and is now identified with one Sesorchis. But the identification of any of these kings is as yet very uncertain.

Amongst other stories in the second book of Herodotus is one not quite presentable to the general reader, about a Greek beauty of doubtful repute, named Rhodôpis ("Rosy-cheek"), who had been brought as a slave to Egypt, and who was said to have built one of the Pyramids. Strabo embellishes her history by telling how, when this lady was bathing, an eagle carried off

one of her sandals, and deposited it before the king of Egypt's throne, who was so struck by the suggested beauty of the foot which it fitted, that he sent for her and made her his queen. Such is the venerable antiquity of the story of Cinderella.

It is remarkable that Herodotus says nothing about the Great Sphinx, which strikes all modern travellers so forcibly, and which plays so prominent a part in the legends of the Greek Thebes. He must have seen it, but may have thought it (as he did other things in this mysterious country) "too sacred to mention." Its composite form is supposed to be emblematic of Nature, and connected in some way with the inundations of the Nile.

This second book of Herodotus brings the history of Egypt as an independent power to a close. It is an inexhaustibly rich mine of historical, archæological, and mythological wealth, on whose endless shafts and galleries modern discovery is ever throwing some new light. Formerly the deciphering of the hieroglyphic writing, in which all Egyptian sacred records were kept, was looked upon as all but hopeless, but since the key was supplied by the discovery of the famous Rosetta stone, which bore a Greek translation of its hieroglyphic inscription, scientific patience has been abundantly rewarded. Religion is essentially conservative, and older dialects and characters are continued in her service long after they have been superseded in secular use. We may cite as an example the Church Slavonic dialect of the north, so valuable to philologists; the Sanscrit of India; the Latin still in use in the Roman Catholic ritual. Even in England we still use archaic characters for the inscriptions in our churches, but this is no doubt partly because of their greater picturesqueness.

CHAPTER IV.

CAMBYSES.

"The race of mortal Man is far too weak
To grow not dizzy on unwonted heights."
—GOETHE, "Iphigenia."

As soon after the death of Cyrus as the Persian arms were at liberty, we find them directed against Egypt. The former alliance of that country with Lydia might seem an adequate cause for the invasion, but it is too prosaic for the taste of Herodotus. He makes CambySES, the son of Cyrus, march against Amasis because he had practised on him a deceit something like that of Laban towards Jacob, by sending him as a wife the daughter of the late king, Apries, instead of his own. CambySES was, at all events, no safe subject for a practical joke, and Amasis might have found to his cost that he had jested once too often.

Having purchased a safe-conduct through the desert by swearing brotherhood with the chief of the Arabs,* —by a process much the same as that described by modern African travellers, which consisted in the contracting parties mixing a little of their blood,†—Cam-

* "The safe-conduct granted by the chief of the Bedouins," says Kinglake, "is never, I believe, violated."

† "Several of our men made brotherhood with the Wezees, and

bysen set out for Egypt. But death had put Amasis beyond the reach of all enemies, and his son Psammenitus now reigned in his stead. Dire misfortunes had been portended to the country by the unusual phenomenon of a shower of rain at Thebes. After an obstinate battle, Psammenitus was utterly routed. Herodotus went afterwards over the field, and saw there the bones of the Persians lying in one heap, and those of the Egyptians in another. He remarked that the skulls of the former might be broken by a pebble, while those of the latter resisted even a large stone. This observation he afterwards verified by personal inspection of another battle-field, where a Persian force was subsequently defeated by the revolted Egyptians under Inaros. He attributes the difference to the Egyptians going bareheaded in the sun, while the Persians wore turbans. The Persians followed up their victory by the capture of the city of Memphis and of Psammenitus himself, on which occasion our author introduces one of his characteristic pathetic stories. Cambyses, wishing, says Herodotus, "to try the spirit" of his royal prisoner, ordered Psammenitus and some of the captive the process between Bombay and the sultan's son, Keerenga, may be mentioned. My consent having been given, a mat is spread, and a confidential party or surgeon attends on each. All four squat, as if to have a game at whist; before them are two clean leaves, a little grease, and a spear-head; a cut is made under the ribs of the left side of each party, a drop of blood put on a leaf and exchanged by the surgeons, who rub it with butter twice into the wound with the leaf, which is now torn in pieces and strewn over the "brothers'" heads. A solemn address is made by the older of the attendants, and they conclude the ceremony by rubbing their own sides with butter, shaking hands, and wishing each other success."—Grant's 'Walk through Africa,' p. 103.

nobles to be brought out to the gates of the city. Then he caused the deposed king's daughter, and those of the nobles, to be led past, in the dress of slaves, carrying pitchers on their heads. The nobles wept at the sight, but Psammenitus only bowed his head. Next followed his son and two thousand other young Egyptians, going to execution with ropes round their necks. The people of Memphis had torn limb from limb the crew of a ship which CambySES had sent with a summons to surrender, and this was his reprisal—ten for every man murdered. The nobles again wept and wailed loudly, but Psammenitus comported himself as before. But when he saw one of his former boon companions, an old man now reduced to beggary, asking alms from the soldiers, then his grief broke forth in tears, and he beat himself on the head. CambySES was amazed that he should weep at the fate of his friend, and not at that of his daughter or son, and sent to ask him the reason of his strange conduct. Psammenitus answered, "O son of Cyrus, mine own misfortunes were too great for tears." CambySES was sufficiently touched to order the life of the young prince to be spared, but the reprieve came too late. But from that time Psammenitus was treated better, and might, as Herodotus thinks, had he shown more tact, have been appointed governor of Egypt, since it was the Persian custom thus to honour fallen princes, even giving the kingdoms of rebel vassals to their sons.* But he was unwise enough to plot rebel-

* We have notable instances of this habit in Eastern monarchs recorded in Scripture. Jehoiakim is made king instead of his brother Jehoahaz, by Pharaoh-Nechoh (2 Kings xxiii. 34); Mattaniah instead of his nephew Jehoiachin, by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 17).

lion, and Cambyses, discovering this, put him to death.

✓ And now the son of Cyrus entered on that career of impiety which was certain to have an evil end. He had the body of his enemy Amasis, who had escaped his vengeance while living, torn from its tomb, scourged, and committed to the flames—an act horrible to the Persians, who worshipped fire; horrible to the Egyptians, who looked upon that element as a devouring monster to whom it was impious to give their dead. Then, according to Greek poetical justice, he was seized by infatuation. He planned wild expeditions—one against “the Long-lived” Ethiopians, who dwelt far away to the south, and who might perhaps be identified with the modern Abyssinians (Heeren thinks, with the Somalis) by certain characteristics, such as tall stature, regular though black features, and a great love of animal food. Whoever they were, they are the subject of one of our author’s most characteristic narratives. Cambyses sent envoys to them—men of the tribe of “Fish-eaters,” who knew their language—with presents for their king; a purple robe, a collar and armlets of gold, and a cask of palm-wine, tokens of his goodwill, as “the things in which he himself most delighted.” The Ethiopian king—who was elected for his stature and beauty—made answer almost in the words of Joseph to his brethren: “Surely to search out the land are ye come hither.” He asked how the purple robe was made; and when they explained the mystery of the dye, he said that the Persians’ garments, like themselves, were deceitful. When told the purpose of the golden collar and armlets, he chose to consider them as fetters, and remarked that

"the Ethiopians made them stronger." In fact, as Herodotus declares, the envoys saw men afterwards in prison actually wearing fetters of a metal which was there so plentiful. Only the wine he highly approved of, and asked what the king of Persia ate, and how long men lived in that country. When he heard that corn was the staple food, and that it grew out of the earth, and that eighty years was considered a long life, he replied that he did not wonder at the king's dying so young if he "ate dirt," and that nothing, he was persuaded, could keep him alive even so long, except that excellent liquor. He sent back in return an unstrung bow, with advice that, when the Persians could find a man to bend it, they should then think of attacking the "Long-livers."

Against this distant tribe, however, the Persian king set out with a vast army, without bestowing a thought on his commissariat. Before he had accomplished a fifth of the distance the provisions failed, but he still pushed on. The army fed on the sumpter-beasts till they were exhausted; then on herbs and grass, till they came to the sandy desert, where vegetation ended. At last, when he heard of cannibalism in the ranks, Cambyses thought it was time to return; but he succeeded in bringing back only a small remnant of his host. Another expedition, sent against the temple of Ammon, in the great Oasis, fared even worse, for no news came of it more. It perished, our author thinks, in a sandstorm—more probably from want of water. But Cambyses' heart was hardened. When he returned from his ill-starred march, he found the Egyptians holding high festival. This greatly incensed him, for he thought they were rejoicing at

his defeat. But they were innocently celebrating the incarnation of their national god Apis or Epaphus, who was said to appear from time to time in the similitude "of a calf that eateth hay," and whose "avatar" in that form was denoted by certain sacred marks known to his priests. Cambyses was still more angry when he heard the real cause of this national jubilee : he had the priests scourged all round, forbade the people to rejoice on pain of death, and, to crown all, fell on the sacred beast and wounded him with his dagger, so that he pined away and died. From this precise date, as the Egyptians averred, the madness of Cambyses took a more decided character. But his acts, however unaccountable to a Greek mind, seem to have been little more than those of an Eastern despot of fierce passions and naturally cruel disposition. First he had his brother Smerdis put to death, and then he killed his sister because she mourned for Smerdis. He had sent this brother back to Persia because he excited his jealousy by being the only Persian who could just move the Ethiopian's bow ; and then, having dreamed that he saw Smerdis sitting on his throne and touching heaven with his head, he sent a nobleman named Prexaspes to Susa, who slew him according to his instructions. The story of the murder of the sister was differently told by the Persians and Egyptians. The former said that Cambyses, in the presence of his sister, had set a puppy to fight a lion-cub. The dog was getting the worst of it, when another of the same litter broke the cord that tied him, and came "to help his brother," and both of them together mastered the young lion. Cambyses was amused, but his sister wept, and said that she could not but think of Smerdis, who had no brother

to help him. For this speech he killed her. The Egyptians said that the pair were seated at table, when the sister took a lettuce, and, stripping its leaves off, asked Cambyzes whether it looked better with its leaves off or on? He answered, "With its leaves on." "Then why," said she, "didst thou strip of its leaves the stem of Cyrus?" A furious kick which followed this remark was the cause of her death. In fact, Cambyzes had now become dangerous to all about him. Croesus, whom he had brought with him to Egypt, had more than one narrow escape. On one occasion officers were sent to put him to death, but they, knowing their master's moods, only pretended to have done it, and produced Croesus alive as soon as Cambyzes was heard to regret the order. He was well pleased that his friend had not been killed, but the disobedience cost the guards their lives. Another time he shot the son of Prexaspes through the heart to prove the steadiness of his hand, merely because the father had told him, in answer to a question, that the Persians said he was rather too fond of wine. Probably for some similar offensive remark he buried up to their necks twelve of his nobles—a cruel process still practised in the East under the name of "tree-planting."* And he grew more and more profane. He opened tombs and unrolled mummies like a modern

* "Feti-Ali-Shah once sent for Astra-chan, one of his courtiers, and with an appearance of great friendship took him round his garden, showing him all its beauties. When he had finished the circuit, he appealed to Astra-chan to know 'what his garden still lacked?' 'Nothing,' said the courtier; 'it is quite perfect.' 'I think differently,' replied the king; 'I must decidedly plant a tree in it.' Astra-chan, who knew the king's meaning only too well, fell at his feet and begged his life, which he obtained only at the price of surrendering to the king the lady to whom he was betrothed."—Rawlinson, ii. 361, note.

virtuoso. He made sport of the pigmy images of Pthah, or Vulcan, whose ludicrous ugliness must have presented the grim humorist with an irresistible temptation,* and other sacred idols he burnt. Herodotus expresses himself much shocked at all this; but he might have known that the Persians were in general iconoclasts. It is possible that Cambyzes was inspired with the same destructive zeal which induced the more modern Puritans to clear away the saints from the niches of our cathedrals. But as a Greek, our author would sympathise with the Egyptians. It is hard for us to judge how far some of the cruelties reported of Cambyzes may have been the invention of the outraged priests. He has recorded, in another part of his work, an anecdote which illustrates at once the character of Cambyzes and the general incorruptibility of the royal judges of Persia. One of these, named Sisamnes, was found to have accepted bribes. Cambyzes, with the facetious cruelty so common to tyrants of his type, had him flayed, and his skin stretched over the seat which he had occupied while administering the law. He then appointed his son to the vacant post, charging him at the same time never to forget "on what kind of cushion he was sitting."

The modern reader will agree with Herodotus that it is at least right to treat with delicacy the peculiar usages of others. Aristotle quotes one of his anecdotes to illustrate the opinion of those who held that all right and wrong were conventional. King Darius Hystaspes called certain Greeks into his presence, and asked them what they would take to eat their dead fathers? They said that they would do it for

* See the woodcuts and note, Rawlinson, ii. 434.

no consideration whatever. Then he asked a certain tribe of Indians what they would take *not* to eat the bodies of their fathers, but to burn them like the Greeks? They cried aloud, and begged him not to blaspheme. So Sir John Lubbock, in his 'Prehistoric Times,' relates that the Tahitians think it indecent to dine in company; and that as soon as a child is born he is accounted the head of his family, and takes precedence of his father. And the tyranny of public opinion in matters indifferent, of which we complain so often, finds its strongest exemplification among the semi-brutal savages of Australia.

The death of Smerdis had come to the knowledge of but few persons in Persia, and while Cambyses was absent in Egypt, the priest-caste of the Magi made a bold attempt at a revolution. It is probable that under Cyrus and Cambyses this caste, with their peculiar tenets, had been discouraged. A certain Magian, who was a kind of groom of the palace, had a brother who resembled greatly the dead Smerdis, and who (according to Herodotus) bore the same name.* Patizethes seated this brother on the throne, and sent out a proclamation that henceforth all men were to do homage to Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and no longer to Cambyses. When Cambyses heard of this, he thought that Prexaspes had not done his errand, and that it was really his brother Smerdis who had revolted against him; but Prexaspes satisfied him that his orders had been duly executed, and that this

* The Behistun inscription gives the name as Gomates, and does not speak of two brothers. Mr Rawlinson seems to prove clearly that the revolution was a religious one, though nothing to that effect appears in Herodotus.—See his Essay, iii. 548.

was a usurper personating the dead prince. He was at once struck by remorse, seeing that his fratricide had been useless, for his dream was so far fulfilled that a man called Smerdis sat on his throne; and he prepared to march at once in person to Susa to quell the rebellion. As he was mounting his horse, the knob of his sword-sheath fell off, and the bare point of the weapon pierced his thigh, exactly as he had pierced with his dagger the god Apis. His wound brought him to his senses, and he solemnly conjured the Persian nobles to prevent the empire from passing to the Medes, confessing that he had killed his brother Smerdis, and that therefore the present occupant of the throne must be an impostor. The wounded limb soon mortified, and Cambyaes died in Egypt, leaving no issue. Before his death, he asked the name of the village where he lay. He was answered that it was called "Ecbatana." Then he knew that he should die; for an oracle had long ago predicted that he should die at Ecbatana,—which he naturally took to be his own town in Media. The coincidence with the death of our own Henry IV. in the "Jerusalem chamber" is very curious.

"It hath been prophesied to me many years
I should not die but in Jerusalem,
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land;—
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie,—
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die." *

* 'Henry IV.,' Part 2, Act iv. sc. 4.


CHAPTER V.

DARIUS.

“ In the theatre of the World
The people are actors all.
One doth the sovereign monarch play ;
And him the rest obey.”—CALDERON.

THE jealous hatred which Cambyses bore to his brother Smerdis was so well known, that the Persians did not believe his dying declaration that the person who had seized his throne was an impostor. They accepted him as the true Smerdis, son of Cyrus. Such impostures are possible enough in a credulous age. A false Demetrius plays an important part in the history of Russia. There were many who disbelieved the fact of the two English princes having been smothered in the Tower ; and many more, at quite a recent date, have believed that Louis XVII. escaped his jailers, and grew up to manhood. The secluded life of an Eastern monarch would give such an imposture additional chances of success.

The Magian usurper reigned for eight months under the name of Smerdis, giving great satisfaction to most of his subjects, for under him “the empire was peace.” He remitted the heaviest taxes, and enforced no mili-



tary conscription. At last his imposture came to light. Otanes, a Persian nobleman, whose daughter was one of his wives, was informed by her that her husband had no ears. Now the Magian was known to have lost his for some offence in the time of Cyrus.* The result of this revelation was, that Otanes headed the famous conspiracy of the seven nobles, of whom Darius, the son of Hystaspes, sprung from a collateral branch of the royal family, and probably the next legal heir, was one. While they were concocting their plan of attack, a tragical event happened which made immediate action necessary. The Magians, knowing how cruelly Prexaspes had been treated by Cambyses,† thought it their interest to conciliate him, and prevailed upon him to mount on a tower of the palace-wall, and make a speech to the people below, who had grown suspicious, to the effect that their present king was the true Smerdis, the son of Cyrus. But in this they made as fatal a mistake as Shakespeare's Brutus and Cassius did when they allowed Mark Antony to speak at Cæsar's funeral. Prexaspes, instead of lying to please the Magians, proclaimed aloud the real state of the case, and then threw himself from the tower, and was killed on the spot.

* This is the mildest form of mutilation, as the feature seems more ornamental than useful, except to those savage tribes in whom the muscle that moves the ear is developed. It was practised in England as late as the seventeenth century, for such offences as Nonconformity, Petty Treason, Libel, and the like. Prynne is a well-known instance. It is common now in Africa, and is said to give the head the look of a barber's block, but to be attended with no great inconvenience. The False Smerdis, as has been said, never went abroad, and probably wore his turban low on his head.

† See p. 71.

The seven conspirators gained the presence of the false king and his brother with no great difficulty, but within they met with such resistance that two were badly wounded before they succeeded in despatching them. The others cut off the Magians' heads, carried them forth, and showed them to the populace. A general massacre of the Magian caste followed, which lasted till the night. Few of them survived this St Bartholomew of Susa. During the annual festival held henceforth under the name of Magophonia, which we might call the "Median Vespers," none of the hated class dared be seen abroad, though tolerated at other times.

The seven noblemen, according to Herodotus, now resolved themselves into a debating society, for the purpose of discussing different forms of government. That is to say, he here avails himself of an author's favourite licence to propound theories of his own. His sympathies are plainly with democracy, but historical exigencies obliged him to admit that monarchy was adopted. They agreed that one of the seven should be king, and the rest his peers, having free access to the royal presence on all but certain stated occasions. It was then arranged that all should ride their horses to an open place at sunrise, and choose as king the man whose horse was the first to neigh. This was really an appeal to the Sun, to whom the horse was sacred. The omen fell to Darius, by the cunning management of his equerry, and he was at once hailed as king. When he was established in the kingdom, he is said to have set up the figure of a man on horseback, with a commemorative inscription. The story may have been invented subsequently, to account for this work of art, as often happens.


Most valuable light has been thrown on the history of Darius by the discovery of the great Behistun inscription. On the western frontier of the ancient Media there is a precipitous rock 1700 feet high, which forms a portion of the Zagros chain, separating the table-land of Iran from the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. The inscription can only be reached with difficulty, as it is 300 feet from the base of the rock. It is in three languages, — old Persian, Babylonian, and Scythian,—executed, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, in the fifth year of Darius, B.C. 516. The wedge-shaped letters of the Persian copy were deciphered with infinite pains by this great archæologist. Darius mentions in it, under the name of Gaumata, a Magian who personated Bardes* (as he calls him), the son of Cyrus, and says that he slew him by the help of Ormuzd, the Good Spirit, and thus recovered an empire that belonged to his own family, restoring to the Persians the religion which they had lost by the Magian intrusion. He also records that after this he was engaged in quelling a general revolt of the provinces. The main facts accord with those of Herodotus, though there is some difference in the nomenclature. The end of the inscription invokes a curse on any one who might injure it, and this has probably tended to preserve it; just as the curse on Shakespeare's monument, at Stratford-on-Avon, may have conduced

* The *s*, whether at the beginning or end of Persian names, is commonly only a Greek addition. So Bardy(a)—the vowel being pronounced though not written—is Smerdis, Gaumat(a) becomes Gomates, Vashtasp(a) Hystaspes, &c.—See Rawlinson, I. 27-29, nota.

to prevent officious veneration from "moving his bones."

Darius was the first monarch of Persia who regulated the revenues, and assigned the sum that each satrapy ought to pay to the royal treasury. This caused the haughty Persian aristocracy to say of him, in their contempt for red tape, that Cyrus had been a father to the state, Cambyzes a master, but Darius was "a huckster, who would make a gain of everything."

There can be no question that Herodotus had access, either personally or through friends, to the royal records of Persia, or copies of them. He gives a complete list of the various satrapies into which the empire was divided, of the several subject nations which it comprised, and the form and amount of their tribute. The Persians themselves, it must be remarked, like the Magyar grandees in Hungary formerly, were exempt from taxation, and only bound to military service. He says that the Indians, the most numerous race of all, paid into the royal treasury three hundred and sixty talents in gold dust, and that the whole annual revenue was computed at fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty talents, besides a fraction—more than three millions and a half of our money. But it must be considered that this corresponds to the modern Civil List, serving only to defray the expenses of the Court. These Indians must not be supposed to be those of the Peninsula, but rather those of Scinde and the Punjab. The gold which they brought into the royal treasury was said to come from a great desert to the eastward. In this desert there were ants—"bigger than foxes"—and in their hills the gold was found. To procure it the gold-hunters took camels, chiefly



females with young ones, with which they proceeded to the place at the hottest time of day, when the ants were in their holes, filled their bags with the auriferous sand, and then hurried back to escape the pursuit of the ants; the female camels leading the way, as anxious to get back to their young ones. The existence of these gigantic ants has been asserted by comparatively modern travellers, but it seems probable that they must have been really ant-eaters, which burrowed in the hills, and which some informants of Herodotus may have seen.

Amongst the barbarian tribes in dependence on Persia, he mentions one called the Padæans, who, like the Massagetæ before mentioned, allowed none of their sick to die a natural death. The horrible story is quaintly told. "If a man is taken ill, the men put him to death to prevent his flesh being spoiled by his malady. He protests loudly that he never felt better in his life; but they kill and eat him notwithstanding. So, if a woman is ill, the women who are her friends do to her in like manner. (The decent division of the sexes is worth remarking.) If any one reaches old age—a very uncommon occurrence, for he can only do so on condition of never having been ill—they sacrifice him to the gods, and afterwards eat him." Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, writing about 1500, found the practice existing in Sumatra, where the relations assembled in the sick man's house, suffocated him, and then ate him, as he describes it, "in a convivial manner." Among other wonders he mentions Arabian sheep (the forefathers, no doubt, of our "Cape" breed) which had tails three cubits long, for which the shepherds made little trucks to keep them off the ground

—"each sheep having a truck of his own." The mention of remarkable countries and productions leads Herodotus to observe that, while the Greeks have the finest climate, as inhabiting the middle of the earth, yet the farthest inhabited regions have the finest productions—tin, amber, and gold coming, for instance, from the ends of the earth; but in respect of horses he gives the palm to the Nisæan breed of Media. Palgrave, in his *Travels in Arabia*, speaks of the horses of Nedjid as the "cream of the cream" of equine aristocracy.

Soon after the accession of Darius, one of his seven fellow-conspirators, Intaphernes, got into trouble. He insisted on seeing the king during his hours of privacy, and being denied, cut off the noses and ears of two of the palace officials, and hung them round their necks. This displeased the king so much that he condemned Intaphernes and all the males of his family to death. But Darius was touched with pity by the lamentations of the wife of Intaphernes, and allowed her to choose which of her family she would save. She chose her brother—explaining, when the king showed some astonishment at her selection, that such a loss could not possibly be replaced, her father and mother being dead. Pleased with her wit, Darius gave her the life of her eldest son into the bargain. Sophocles adopts the same curious sentiment in his tragedy of *Antigone*. The general justice of Darius would lead to the suspicion that the crime of Intaphernes was of the nature of high treason, otherwise his family would hardly have been involved in his punishment.

The story of Democedes, a famous surgeon of Crotona, who was brought to Persia as a slave, is intro-

duced by Herodotus to find a motive for the attention of the king being called to Greece. He had abundant reasons besides, as the history shows ; but our author will not desert the theory of his choice, that Woman is the mainspring in all human affairs. Democedes had got into favour at court by successful treatment first of Darius himself, then of Atossa the favourite sultana. For this latter service he obtained leave to name his own reward,—it was, to be allowed to visit his home ; and, as Darius wished also to conquer Greece, in order that Atossa's desire of having some of "those Lacedæmonian handmaidens of whom she had heard so much" might be gratified, Democedes was sent to make the tour of Greece and its colonies on the Italian coast with a party of spies. When he reached his native Crotona, he chose to remain there, and was assisted by his fellow-townsmen against the Persians who tried to take him back with them. He bade the latter tell Darius that he was about to be married to the daughter of Milo the wrestler ; wishing the king to know that he was a man of some mark in his own country, where—as in some cases amongst us moderns—athletics ranked even higher than science. These spies were said to have been the first Persians who visited Greece.

But Darius had no time to think of Greece just then, as his hands were full with a revolt in Babylonia and other provinces, which appears to have assumed larger proportions than those known to Herodotus. Samos was the first state which was unfortunate enough to draw upon itself the might of the Persian arms. The cause of this war was a cloak. When Cambyses was in Egypt with his army, one


Syloson, brother of Polycrates of Samos, was also there in exile. He appeared one day at Memphis in a scarlet cloak, to which Darius, who was then a plain officer of the royal guards, took a fancy, and asked the wearer to name his price. Syloson, in a fit of generosity, begged him to accept it as a present; and it had no sooner been accepted than he repented of his good-nature. As matters turned out, the cloak of Syloson became as famous as that of Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh "spoilt a cloak and made a fortune," by spreading out his for Queen Elizabeth to walk on; Syloson, by giving his away, led the way to the ruin of his country. For when Darius came to the throne, Syloson introduced himself at court as the hero of the cloak, and Darius asked him what he could do for him in return. He requested to be put in possession of his late brother's dominion in Samos. Mæandrius, the secretary of Polycrates, who was at present in possession, was a man who had had greatness thrust upon him. When Polycrates was murdered, the secretary found himself in possession of Samos; and wishing to be "the justest of men," set up an altar to the god of Freedom, stipulating only that he should be appointed its high priest as a condition of his establishing democracy. Finding, however, that the "Irreconcilables" of the period intended to prosecute him for embezzlement, he had repented of his republican generosity, and made himself master of the citadel and city. Darius now sent out an expedition which put his friend Syloson in possession of the island, but not without an insurrection, which led to a terrible massacre of the people.

Babylon, according to the Behistun inscription, re-

volted from Darius twice—once in the first and again in the fourth year of his reign. It is difficult to identify with either of these occasions the revolt now mentioned by Herodotus. According to his account,—which in this instance must be regarded rather as romance than history—so determined was the attempt, that the Babylonians strangled most of their women, in order to reduce their population, in preparation for the expected siege. Darius soon sat down before the city, but the walls defied his utmost power; and the besieged began to jeer the Persians, telling them that “they would never take the city until mules foaled.” However, in the twentieth month of the siege, a mule belonging to Zopyrus, a Persian of rank, did foal—an event perhaps not physically impossible; and Zopyrus thought that there must have been something providential in the taunt of the Babylonians, and that now the city might be taken. The sequel, whether true or not in an historical sense, is singularly illustrative of the chivalrous self-devotion of the Persian nobility in the interests of their monarch. Zopyrus proceeded to cut off his own nose and ears, clipt his hair close, got himself scourged, and in that state presented himself to Darius, and laid his plan before him.* Darius was greatly shocked at his retainer’s maltreatment of himself, but as it was too late to mend the matter, made the proposed arrangement. Zopyrus was to pretend to desert to the Babylonians, telling them that Darius had so ill-used him because he had advised him to raise the siege. The Babylonians would probably believe him, and intrust

* The town of Gabii, according to Livy, was taken by the Romans by a very similar stratagem.

him with the command of a division. Darius must then be willing to sacrifice a few thousands of his worst soldiers to give the Babylonians confidence in Zopyrus, who, when he had the game safe in his hands, would open the gates to the Persian army. All turned out according to the programme. Zopyrus admitted the Persians, who took the city. Darius did his best to destroy the formidable walls, and had three thousand of the leading rebels impaled ; but not wishing to depopulate the city, procured from the neighbouring nations fifty thousand women to make up for those whom the Babylonians had sacrificed. As for Zopyrus, the king loaded him with honours and made him governor of Babylon ; but he was wont to say,—more scrupulous than Henry IV. of France, who changed his religion to procure the surrender of the capital, thinking Paris “well worth a mass,”—that he would rather have Zopyrus unmutilated than be master of twenty Babylons.



CHAPTER VI

SCYTHIA.

“They dwell
In wattled sheds on rolling cars aloft,
Accoutred with far-striking archery.”
—ÆSCHYLUS, “Prometheus.”

HAVING disposed of Babylon, Darius next bethought himself of the Scythians. He had an old national grudge against this restless race, for having overrun Asia in the days of Cyaxares the Mede. The Behistun inscription only mentions the quelling of a revolt of the Sacæ, or Scythian subjects of Persia; but Herodotus speaks of an expedition on a vast scale against the independent nation.

The Scythians were, according to Herodotus, a people whose seat was in the steppes of northern Russia, more widely spread than the present Cossacks of the Don, but without any definite boundaries, sometimes encroaching on their neighbours and sometimes encroached upon by them, like the Tartar hordes at this day. Their name has been supposed by some to be a synonym for “archers.” Their habits were very like those of the terrible Huns and Magyars who overran part of Europe in the last agonies of

Rome and afterwards ; but the difficulty of identifying a modern and civilised race with an ancient and barbarous one, is shown by the dissimilarity of the handsome and chivalrous Hungarians with their hideous and unkempt progenitors. They seem to have inherited from them little besides their love of horse-flesh—in the civilised sense.

That the Scythians disappeared from history, when history itself was at its lowest ebb, is no proof that they exist nowhere now. Their language, specimens of which are given by Herodotus, undoubtedly belongs to that of the Indo-Germanic family. Their connection with the Sacæ is established. Some connect the Sacæ with the Saxons, others also with the Sikhs of northern India. It would indeed be strange if it were discovered from critical philology and archæology that the English were pitted against their cousins at Sobraon, Chilianwallah, and Gujerat, and recovered India through their aid afterwards ; and that some of our Saxon ancestors were those who fought best on the losing side at Marathon and Platea. Certain it is that nearly all the now dominant races of mankind seem to have swarmed, at longer or shorter intervals, from some mysterious hive about or beyond the Caucasus. History records some of the waves of their western or eastern progress. Before the Scythians came a swarm of Cimmerians, sweeping over Asia Minor in the time of the predecessors of Croesus. Their name is still retained in the Crimea and Krim Tartary. They reappear as Cimbri in the latter days of the Roman republic, to which they were very near giving the finishing stroke. Then they are heard of in Schleswick and Jutland, and in Wales it is just possible that at

the present day they call themselves Cymry. Before their coming a horde of Celts or Gauls had fallen on Rome, and another invaded Greece later on, leaving permanent settlements in Lombardy and Asia Minor.

In earlier history these tidal waves of population came at long intervals, so that the damage they did was reparable, and the silt they left behind them only strengthened the ground ; but in the latter days of the Roman Cæsars, they succeeded one another so quickly that the Empire was swamped, and when the disturbance had subsided, the earth wore a face that was strange and new. The repentant sons of those savage children of the night, calling themselves English, French, Germans, and so forth, are now endeavouring to atone for their fathers' delinquencies by painfully diving after the relics of lost civilisations, and preserving whatever they can find with religious veneration for the use and delight of ages to come. By degrees we are opening up Greece, Italy, Assyria, Persia, India, Egypt, and discovering to our dismay that much of our boasted civilisation is but a parody on what prevailed centuries or millenniums ago ; and that, with all our culture, we have still much barbarism to unlearn.

The Scythians described by Herodotus, like the Parthians who defeated the Roman legions, are a race of archers on horseback. From them the Greeks may have derived their fables of the Centaurs. As a pastoral people, they were generally averse to the tillage of land, and moved about with their herds from one feeding-ground to another, carrying their skin-covered huts on carts. That the Sarmatians were allied with them appears from the fable which traces their descent to the union of Scythians with Amazons, those wonder-

ful viragos whose manlike habits are still kept up by the women of some Tartar tribes.

To account for the origin of the Scythians, Herodotus gives two fables. According to one, a certain Targitæus, a son of Jupiter, and grandson by his mother's side of the river Borysthenes or Dnieper, was the first man in Scythia. He had three sons. At first they were all equal, when there fell from heaven four implements of gold—a plough, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a goblet. The eldest approached to take them, when they broke out into flames, and he durst not touch them. The second was rejected in like manner. The youngest fared better: he was able to handle the gold and to carry it off. This was a sign that he should be the king.* From the three

* A somewhat similar story was told to Speke by Rumanika, king of Karagû.

"Before their old father Dagara died, he had unwittingly said to the mother of Rogero, although he was the youngest born, 'what a fine king he would make;' and the mother in consequence tutored him to expect to succeed, although primogeniture is the law of the land, subject to the proviso, which was also the rule with the ancient Persians, that the heir must have been born after his father's accession, which condition was here fulfilled in the case of all three brothers. . . . Rumanika maintained that Rogero was entirely in the wrong, not only because the law was against him, but the judgment of heaven also. On the death of the father, the three sons, who only could pretend to the crown, had a small mystic drum placed before them by the officers of state. It was only feather-weight in reality, but being loaded with charms, became too heavy for those not entitled to the crown to move. Neither of the other brothers could move it an inch, while Rumanika easily lifted it with his little finger. . . . He (Rumanika) moreover said that a new test had been invented in his case besides the ordeal of lifting the drum. The supposed rightful heir had to plant

brothers sprang the three Scythian tribes—the “Royal” Scythians from the youngest. According to the other legend, which emanated from a Greek source, Hercules, when he was carrying off the cattle of Geryon (who lived on an island near Cadiz in Spain), came to Scythia, and being overcome by frost and fatigue, wrapt himself in his lion’s skin, and fell asleep. When he awoke his team of mares had disappeared. He wandered in quest of them till he came to a country called the Bush. Here he found in a cave a strange being, half woman, half serpent, who detained him with her by holding out hopes of his recovering his mares, which she had caught and hidden.* Three sons were the

himself on a certain spot, when the land on which he stood would rise up like a telescope drawn out till it reached the skies. If he was entitled to the throne, it would then let him down again without harm ; but if otherwise, collapse and dash him to pieces. Of course as he survived the trial, it was successful. On another occasion a piece of iron was found in the ground, about the shape and size of a carrot. This iron could not be extracted by any one but Rumanika himself, who pulled it up with the greatest ease.”—‘Lake Victoria ;’ a compilation from the Memoirs of Captains Speke and Grant.

* These legends of serpent-women are not uncommon in German mythology. The following adventure is related by the brothers Grimm : “One Leonhard, who was a stammerer, but a good fellow, and of irreproachable morals, lost his way one day as he was visiting some underground vaults of the nature of catacombs. All at once he found himself in a delicious meadow, in the midst of which was playing a young girl, half concealed by the herbage. She invited him to come and rest by her side. Leonhard, out of pure politeness, obeyed her eagerly, and then became aware of a fact which the long grass had at first prevented his observing,—that the damsel, the upper part of whose body was white and beautiful, terminated below in a scaly and serpent-like tail. He wished to fly, but his legs

result of this strange intimacy—one called Agathyrus, the other Gelonus, the other Scythes. Hercules, on his departure, left with the mother a bow, and a belt with a goblet attached to it. The son who could bend the bow was to inherit the land, the others to emigrate. Scythes, the youngest, bent the bow, and remained to be the father of the kings of Scythia, which accounted for the Scythian custom of wearing a goblet attached to the girdle.

In describing the geography of Scythia, of which were immediately caught and embraced by her tail. Thus forced to listen, he now heard the poor creature's history. She was born a princess, and was enjoying court society, when a malicious enchanter charmed her into her present state, from which she could only be released on one condition, and that was, that she could prevail on some fair young man, who must be perfectly innocent, to give her three kisses. The youth must not be older than twenty-two. There was time for Léonhard to have fulfilled the conditions, for he would be twenty-three on that very day—in two hours more. But, unfortunately, he stammered, and the two hours were almost gone before he had made the necessary preliminary statement as to his birth. Then he gave her the first kiss. Upon that she was seized with violent convulsions, and rolled so wildly on the grass that he fled in alarm. He was, however, recalled by her supplications and promises, and gave her the second kiss. The effect of this was still more electric than that of the first. Her eyes burned like fire, she sprang up, her face glowed and her cheeks seemed bursting; she whirled about like a demoniac, and hissed, shrieked, and yelled like a very Melusina. Frightened out of his wits, the youth rushed away through the meadow and catacombs till the hideous object was out of sight; but after a time, reflecting that he might have made his fortune and married a princess, he turned to go back once more. It was too late; for, to his unspeakable chagrin, he just then heard a village clock strike twelve, which made him twenty-three years of age.—X. R. Saintine, '*La Mythologie du Rhin*' (free translation).

Herodotus probably knew no more than he may have heard at the Greek factory at Olbia (near the site of the modern Kinburn), he is carried away by the interest of his subject, and launches out into a geographical digression, chiefly entertaining as a record of ancient notions, and as showing how facts become altered in passing from mouth to mouth. The "Scythia" of Herodotus seems to embrace "the basins of the Don, Dnieper, Dniester, and Boug, and the northern half of that of the Lower Danube"*—*i.e.*, a great portion of Russia, Bessarabia, Wallachia, and Moldavia. He tells strange stories of the tribes who dwelt around Scythia, as far as the uttermost parts of Europe. The Issedonians and the Androphagi were given to cannibalism; the former, like the Callatian Indians, feasting on their fathers, and keeping their skulls set in gold as heirlooms. This custom was, however, balanced with another, which would place them, as some might think now, in the van of progress—they gave women equal rights with men. The Neuri were said to change into wolves periodically; a tradition which still survives in the "wehr-wolf" of the Germans, and the "loup-garou" of the French. Livingstone relates that there were men in the country above the Zambesi who were supposed to become lions for a term, and that the souls of great captains were thought to pass into the king of beasts. But perhaps the story rose out of the fact that the Neuri wore wolf-skins in winter. There were people in the extreme north who slept six months in the year (Herodotus's informant may have said that there was night for six months), and who had goat's feet—that is, they may

* Heeren.

have worn moccasins. These may have suggested the Satyrs of the Greeks. A common superstition also placed a wonderfully good and happy people behind the region of the north wind, called Hyperboreans. So the "blameless" Ethiopians were supposed to inhabit the extreme South. The Greeks believed in goodness when a very long way from home.

Our author mentions slightly, and with some disdain, the legend (known also to other writers) of one of these Hyperboreans, Abaris, who was said to have been even a greater traveller than himself—who "walked round the world with an arrow, without once eating." But whatever may be thought of the latter part of the story, it seems highly probable that in Abaris's "arrow" we have a dim tradition of the magnetic needle. Its properties were certainly known to the Chinese long before Herodotus's date, and some rumour of the marvel might have reached Europe. The story tempts Herodotus into speculative cosmography. He is dissatisfied with the map of Hecataeus, who divided the habitable world into two equal portions, Europe and Asia, making it like a medal, with the great river of Ocean for a rim; not that he himself at all suspected the world of being a sphere, like some of the later ancients, but that he thought the distribution of the continents manifestly unsound.

If Herodotus had been in the habit of rejecting every tale that he did not believe, like some later writers, we should have lost the valuable passage which seems to prove that Africa was circumnavigated twenty-one centuries before the time of Diaz and Vasco de Gama. Pharaoh Necho, after giving up the Suez canal as hopeless, sent a fleet of Phœnician ships down


the Red Sea, ordering them to return to Egypt by the pillars of Hercules—that is, by the Strait of Gibraltar. As these were their orders, it is to be presumed that the route was already known. They spent three years in accomplishing their task, as they had to sow grain on the way, and wait for the harvest. Herodotus pronounces their voyage apocryphal, because they reported they had the sunrise on their right hand as they sailed round Libya, but which proves indeed that they had doubled the Cape of Good Hope. Sataspes, a Persian, tried to sail round Africa in the other direction, but failed. He had got beyond Cape Soloeis (Spartel) to a country inhabited by a dwarfish people, who dressed in palm-leaves; and there, as he declared, the ship stopped, and would go no further. He had evidently fallen in with the southerly trade-wind, and was not aware that, in order to proceed, he ought to have pushed across towards the South American continent. He met with a fate worse even than that of some later discoverers: he was not only disbelieved, but put to death on his return. Darius appears to have taken a great interest in such discoveries, and it was he who sent Scylax the Carian down the Indus to explore the Indian Ocean.*

Amongst the strange customs which Herodotus records of the Scythians was their manner of keeping the anniversary of the burial of their kings. They slew fifty young men and fifty choice horses, stuffed

* This Scylax, or more probably a later writer who traded on his name, brought home some remarkable travellers' stories. He described an Indian tribe whose feet were so large that they used them as parasols, and another whose ears were so capacious that they slept in them.—See Rawlinson, I. p. 50, note.

the bodies of both, and set them up round the tomb in a circle, the men mounted on the horses, a ghastly body-guard for the royal ghost. Their great deity was the god of war, whom they worshipped under the shape of a scimitar. The Russian or Turkish vapour-bath would appear to have been another of their institutions; but Herodotus seems to confuse it with the process of intoxication by hemp-seed, which was known in early times. They were also distinguished by drunkenness and dislike of foreigners, like some of their supposed descendants, who are not yet cured of these weaknesses.

Against this nation Darius is said by Herodotus to have moved a vast army, bridging over the Thracian Bosphorus and the Danube with boats, and taking with him the Ionian fleet, to the custody of whose commanders he committed the bridge over the river, while he passed on into the northern wildernesses. The Scythians retreated before him towards the Tanais or Don. Then they led him such a long chase that at last his patience was worn out, and he sent to their king to demand that, as a man of honour, he should either stand and fight, or deliver earth and water in token of submission. The Scythian replied that he would soon send him some presents more to the purpose. These arrived in due course of time—a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. Darius at first thought that this signified a tender of homage; but Gobryas, one of the Seven, who had an older head, read the hieroglyphic letter as follows: “Unless you can fly like a bird, or burrow like a mouse, or swim like a frog, you will not escape the Scythian arrows.” Darius took the hint and retreated.



But Scythian horsemen had reached his bridge before him, and tried to prevail on the Ionians to destroy it. Miltiades the Athenian, now tyrant of the Chersonese (of whom we shall hear again), called upon his fellow-Greeks to strike, once for all, a blow for freedom ; to cut the bridge, and leave their Persian masters to perish. But he was overruled in the interest of Darius by Histæus of Miletus, and the Persian army returned without irretrievable loss from its military promenade in pursuit of the impalpable Scythians. Megabazus remained behind to reduce the Thracian tribes in the neighbourhood of the Hellespont.

This leads our author to discuss the ethnology of Thrace. It appeared to him that if its numerous tribes had been only united, they would have been a match for any existing nation. His Thrace must nearly have comprehended the present limits of Roumelia, Bulgaria, Servia, Moldavia, and Wallachia. The Getæ or Goths, who were subdued by Darius on his way to Scythia, believed that when they died they went to a good spirit named Zalmoxis, to whom they sent a messenger every five years ; that is, they sacrificed a man by tossing him in the air and catching him on points of lances. Another tribe, when a child was born, sat round him, bewailing the miseries he would have to undergo ; while in a case of death they made a jubilee of the funeral, believing the departed to have attained everlasting happiness. The same belief was connected with a custom in another tribe corresponding to the "Suttee" of the Hindoos. When a man died there was a sharp contention amongst his widows which was the worthiest to be slain over his grave, and the surviving wives considered themselves as in disgrace.

They marked high birth by tattooing, like the South Sea Islanders ; and thought idleness, war, and plunder honourable, but agriculture mean. The nation in general worshipped only the gods of battle, of wine, and of the chase. But the kings paid especial honour to a god corresponding to Hermes or Mercury, or the German Woden. Less was known of the tribes north of the Danube. The Sigynnæ wore a dress like that of the Medes, and possessed a breed of active, hardy, shaggy ponies, the description of which answers to those of the Shetland Islands. Or possibly some vague rumour of the harnessed dogs of Kamskatka may have reached the ears of our author. He does not think that the Thracians could have been correct in saying that a tract of country beyond the Danube was so infested with bees as to be uninhabitable, as bees cannot bear much cold. They may have meant mosquitoes.

Megabazus was now commissioned to transport bodily to Persia the whole tribe of the Pæonians, who lived to the north of Macedonia, of whose industry Darius had conceived an exaggerated notion, by seeing one of their women at Sardis bearing a pitcher on her head, leading a horse, and spinning flax all at the same time. He effected this task with no great difficulty ; but other tribes resisted his arms with success, and especially those who inhabited the Lake Prasias. These must have been a relic of the most ancient population of Europe. Their habits were precisely the same as those of the singular people whose whole manner of life has been brought to light by the discovery of ancient piles in the lakes of Zurich in Switzerland, and who appear to have inhabited nearly all the comparatively shallow lakes that have hitherto been

examined. This pile-city of Prasias is thus described :—

“Platforms supported on tall piles were fixed in the midst of the lake, approached from the land by a single narrow bridge. Originally all the citizens in common drove the piles for the platform, but afterwards every man drove three piles for every wife he married, and they had each several wives. Each man had his own hut on the platform, and his trap-door opening through the scaffolding on the lake below. They tied the little children by the leg to prevent their rolling into the water.” (The proportionate number of children’s bones found in the Swiss lakes would argue that this custom was but negligently observed in those regions.) “They fed their horses and other cattle upon fish, of which there was such an abundance that they had only to let down a basket through the trap-door into the water, and draw it up full.”

What was the ultimate fate of this amphibious colony we do not learn ; but very many of the corresponding settlements in central Europe bear traces of having been destroyed by fire. For the present these lake-people were impregnable, and Megabazus turned his attention to Macedonia, sending first to the court of King Amyntas an embassy of seven noble Persians to demand earth and water. Amyntas entertained them at a feast ; but when their attentions to the ladies of the court began to be offensive, his son Alexander, indignant at the insult, dressed up some Macedonian youths to personate the ladies, whom he had managed to withdraw under promise of their return, and assassinated the Persian envoys when heavy with wine. An expedition was afterwards sent to inquire

after their fate, but Alexander conciliated the commander with hush-money and the hand of his sister in marriage. The royal family of Macedonia were of Argive origin, according to Herodotus ; otherwise, he says, they would not have been allowed to contend at the Olympic games. This Greek descent was used subsequently by Philip of Macedon as a plea for his intervention in the affairs of Greece.

A casual notice of the founding of Cyrene leads Herodotus into Libya, whither we have no space to follow him. He touches on the known North African tribes, and glances at the unknown, relating many marvellous stories ; in fact, his love for anthropology and geography makes him seize any excuse for imparting information. He wellnigh exhausts the world as known to the ancients, and might have wept, as Alexander did that he had no more worlds to conquer, that he had no more to describe. Of one remote and apocryphal region he confesses he knew nothing. He was not sure that the islands called the Cassiterides ("Tin-Islands") had any real existence ; but he had been told that tin came "from the ends of the earth." Such is the sole notice which the great traveller has left of us or our ancestors ; for it is probable that the Cassiterides were the coast of Cornwall.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TYRANTS OF GREECE.


" If gods will not misfortune send,
List to the counsel of a friend ;
Call on thyself calamity ;
And that, from all thy treasures bright,
In which thy heart takes most delight,
Commit forthwith to deepest sea."
—SCHILLER, "Ring of Polycrates."

THE original constitution of most of the Greek States was a limited monarchy, though the king was emphatically "hedged by divinity," since the founder of his family was generally supposed to be a god. In time, as the royal prestige wore out, this constitution was generally superseded by an oligarchy, which lasted until some ambitious individual, by courting the unprivileged classes, managed to raise himself to the supremacy.

In the fifth century before Christ there were so many of these usurpers at the same time in Greece, that it has been called the Age of Tyrants. Mr Grote prefers to call them "despots ;" but the name matters little if no sinister meaning is necessarily attached to the word Tyrant. Their number at one time was a fact in support of those who believe in social and

political epidemics. One of the most famous of them was Polycrates of Samos. He was great in arms and arts, and the poet Anacreon was the companion of his revels, just as Goethe enjoyed his Rhenish with Charles Augustus, the jolly Grand-Duke of Weimar. His prosperity was so perfect, that his friend King Amasis of Egypt, as a prudent man, thought it his duty to give him a solemn warning, and advised him to avert the anger of the gods by sacrificing some object which he held very precious. Polycrates chose out of his abundant treasures a favourite emerald ring, which he at once threw into the sea. Five or six days afterwards, a poor fisherman caught so magnificent a fish that it struck him that it was only fit to set before a king. To Polycrates, therefore, he presented it, with many compliments. The tyrant, with his usual geniality, made it a condition that the fisherman would come and help him to eat it. He bashfully accepted the honour. When the fish was served, behold! the emerald ring was there in its inside. The servants were exceedingly glad that the king's lost ring was found—possibly they had been charging each other with stealing it; but Polycrates looked serious, for he felt that the gods had rejected his offering. He thought it right to inform his friend Amasis of the result. Amasis, with less generosity than foresight, at once sent a herald to Samos to renounce the alliance of Polycrates, as he felt sure that the gods had decreed his ruin, and did not wish to be himself involved in it. The tale of the fisherman and the ring has been transferred to Arabian fable. ✓

Fortune still continued to smile on Polycrates, and he overcame all his enemies by force or fraud. Some



Samians, whom he had driven out, managed to set on foot against him an expedition from Lacedæmon. The visit of these people to Sparta is characteristically told. They made a long speech there in the assembly, which they would have hardly done if they had known the Spartan temper better. The authorities made reply that they had forgotten the first half of their discourse, and could not understand the second. The Samians then held up an empty bag, merely remarking, "The bag wants flour." The Spartans said that the word "bag" was quite unnecessary—the gesture was enough. However, they sent a force to Samos to support the exiles; and Polycrates is said to have bribed them to return with leaden money gilt over. The existence of the story is singularly illustrative of the avarice as well as the gullibility of this people.

But the doom of Polycrates could only be deferred. Towards the end of the reign of Cambyses, he was unfortunate enough to excite the cupidity of Oroetes, the Persian satrap of Sardis, who proceeded to set a trap for him. Oroetes said that he feared the covetousness of Cambyses, and offered to deposit all his treasure with Polycrates. The latter sent his secretary to inspect it, who was shown some large chests full of stones, just covered with gold. Satisfied with this report, in spite of all the warnings of his daughter, Polycrates started for the court of Oroetes to fetch the treasure. The satrap at once arrested him, put him to a cruel death, and then impaled his dead body. But the murderer afterwards came to a violent end himself in the reign of Darius.

Another specimen of a tyrant, and this, too, in our common acceptance of the word, was Periander of

Corinth, the son of Cypselus. By his origin he was partly patrician and partly plebeian. At one time the government of Corinth was in the hands of a single family called the Bacchiadae, who only intermarried with one another. But one of them happened to have a daughter called, from her lameness, Labda (from the Greek letter Λ (L), which originally had one leg shorter than the other), whom her parents were, on this account, obliged to marry out of the family to one Aëtion, a man of the people. In consequence of oracles which boded ill to Corinth from a son of Aëtion, the rulers sent ten of their number to despatch the infant as soon as he was born. When they came and asked to see the child, Labda showed it them, thinking their visit was only complimentary. They had agreed that whoever took the child first in his arms should dash it on the ground. Providentially, however, the babe smiled in the man's face who had taken him, so that he had no heart to kill it, but passed it on to his neighbour, and he to another, and so it went through all the ten. When the mother had carried the child indoors again, she overheard the party outside loudly reproaching one another with their faint-heartedness in not making away with it. Fearing from this that they would return, she hid the child away in a chest or corn-bin, so that when they re-entered they could not find him. From this escape he was called Cypselus or 'Bin.' When he grew up he made himself despot of Corinth, and ruled harshly, visiting the citizens with confiscations, banishment, and death. He reigned thirty years, and then his son Periander succeeded him, who, at first, was a mild ruler, until he sent to Thrasybulus, despot of Miletus, to ask him

the best way of governing his people. Thrasybulus took the Corinthian herald forth into the fields, and as he passed through the corn, still questioning him about Corinthian affairs, he snapped off and threw away all the ears that overtopped the rest. He walked through the whole field doing this, till the damage was considerable. After this he dismissed his visitor without a word of advice. When the messenger returned to Periander, he said that he had been sent on a fool's errand to a madman, who gave him no answer, but only walked through a field spoiling his wheat by plucking off all the longest ears.* Periander said nothing; but he understood the meaning of Thrasybulus, which was, that he was to govern by cutting off all the foremost citizens. After this he became a much worse tyrant than his father, and finished the work which he had begun. On one occasion he stripped all the women of Corinth of their clothes. Having sent to consult an oracle of the dead† about some lost property, the shade of his wife Melissa (whom he had put to death) appeared to him, and said that she was cold, and had literally nothing to put on; for the robes buried with her were of no use, since they had not been burnt. So he made proclamation that all the matrons should go to the temple of Juno in full dress, and there having surrounded them

* The English reader will remember the words of the gardener in Shakespeare:—

“Go thou, and like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth.”

—‘Richard II.,’ Act. iii. sc. 4.

† Hence the word “necromancy.” The parallel of Saul, the witch of Endor, and the ghost of Samuel, is at once suggested.

with his guards, took all their clothes from them, and burnt them as an offering to his dead queen.

The relations of Periander with his younger son Lycophron form one of the most touching episodes in Herodotus. The lad had learnt the fact of his mother's murder, and from that time would neither speak to his father nor answer him. The father at last banished him from his house. He even sent warning to the friends with whom his son took refuge, that all who harboured him did so at their peril—nay, that any who even spoke to him should pay a fine to Apollo. The lad wandered miserably from one to the other, and at last was found lying in the public porticoes. Then Periander himself went to him, and upbraided him with his folly in depriving himself by his obstinacy of a princely home. Lycophron only answered by reminding his father that he had now himself incurred the forfeit to the god. Periander saw that the case was hopeless, and sent him to Corcyra for safe keeping. But when he found himself growing old, and unequal to the cares of government, and saw that his elder son was quite incompetent, he sent to offer to resign in Lycophron's favour. No reply came. Then the father sent his favourite sister to treat with him, and try to soften his heart. Lycophron's answer was that he would never set foot again in Samos while his father lived. Periander humbled himself so far as to offer to retire himself to Corcyra, and allow the son to take his place. To this Lycophron agreed; on hearing which the people of Corcyra murdered him, in dread of receiving as their master the terrible Periander.

A pleasanter story in connection with him will be best told, as nearly as may be, in the old historian's

own words, with a little retrenchment of his diffuseness.

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN.

In Periander's days there lived a minstrel of Lesbos, Arion by name, who was second to none as a player on the lute. This Arion, who spent most of his time with Periander, sailed to Italy and Sicily, and having earned by his minstrelsy great store of treasure, hired a Corinthian ship to go back to Corinth—for whom should he trust rather than the Corinthians, whom he knew so well. When the crew were out at sea, they took counsel together to throw Arion overboard, and keep his treasure. But he divined their intent, and besought them to take his money, but spare his life. But the shipmen refused, and bade him either straightway kill himself on board, so that he might be buried on shore, or leap into the sea of his own freewill. Then Arion, being in a sore strait, begged, since it must be so, that he might don his vestments, and sing one strain standing on the quarterdeck; and when he had ended his song he promised to despatch himself. [He asked to put on his sacred garb, knowing that thereby he should gain the protection of Apollo.] The seamen consented, as well pleased once more to hear the master of all singers, and made space to hear him, withdrawing into the midship; and he chanted a lively air, and then plunged overboard, all as he was. So they sailed away to Corinth, and thought no more of Arion. But, lo! a dolphin took the minstrel up on his back, and landed him safely at the promontory of Tænarus in Laconia, whence he made his way to Corinth, all in his sacred robes, and told there all that had befallen him. But

Periander did not believe him, and kept him under guard. At last the shipmen came, and when Periander asked them what had become of Arion, they said they had left him safe and sound at Tarentum, in Italy. Then Periander produced Arion in his vestments, just as he was when he leapt overboard, and they were struck dumb, and could deny their guilt no more. And Arion set up, as a thank-offering to the god, an effigy of a man riding on a dolphin.

Such is the legend given by Herodotus. Another version makes Apollo appear to Arion in a dream, assuring him of succour before he leapt overboard, and adds that, after landing, the bard neglected to put back again into the sea his preserver, who consequently perished, and was buried by the king of the country. When the sailors came, they were made to swear to the truth of their story on the dolphin's tomb, where Arion had been previously hid. When he suddenly appeared, they confessed their guilt, and were punished by crucifixion, for the double crime of robbery with intent to murder, and perjury. Arion and his bearer afterwards became a constellation, by the will of Apollo, according to a later addition to the legend.

It is not impossible that the legend of Arion grew out of the group of the man on the dolphin, which may have been set up to commemorate the expedition which sailed from Laconia to found Tarentum, comprised of Dorian and Achæan Greeks; the dolphin, sacred to Neptune, symbolising the Achæan element, and the minstrel, loved of Apollo, the Dorian. The legend of Colston, the munificent Bristol merchant, whose anniver-

sary is still celebrated at Bristol, is well known in the west of England. A ship in which he sailed was said to have sprung a leak, which was miraculously plugged by a self-sacrificing dolphin, and so the ship came home safe. Some rationalists have volunteered the prosaic explanation that Colston was saved and brought home in another vessel called the Dolphin. One of the charitable societies formed in his honour bears the name of the "Dolphin." The sacred character of this fish (or rather cetacean) is doubtless of remote antiquity. He is the subject of a little poem (exquisite in the original) by Philip of Thessalonica.

THE DOLPHIN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

"Blaming Boreas, o'er the sea I was flying slowly,
For the wind of Thrace to me is a thing unholy,
When his back a dolphin showed, bending with devotion,
And the child of æther rode on the child of ocean.
I am that sweet-chanting bird whom the night doth smile
at ;
And like one that kept his word proved my dolphin pilot.
As he glided onward still with his oarless rowing,
With the lute within my bill I did cheer his going.
Dolphins never ply for hire, but for love and glory,
When the sons of song require ; trust Arion's story."


There is also a beautiful version of the legend by the Roman poet Ovid.

Cleisthenes of Sicyon was another eminent tyrant, and a magnificent man in every way. He had one beautiful daughter named Agariste, through whom despotism was fated to receive its death-blow in Athens. Like the Orsinis and Colonnas of medieval Rome,

whose feuds gave Rienzi his opportunity to establish democracy, the patrician families of the Isagorids and Alcmaeonids strove for supremacy at Athens, and their strife gave birth to freedom. Herodotus gives a quaint account of the foundation of the great wealth of the latter family.

Alcmaeon, the son of Megacles, had assisted Croesus in his negotiations with the Delphic oracle, and was invited in consequence to the court of Sardis. When he had arrived, Croesus gave him leave to go into the treasury and take as much gold as he could carry away on his person at one time. So he put on the largest tunic he could find, so as to make a capacious fold, and the roomiest buskins. First he stowed his boots with gold dust, then he packed his clothes with it, then he powdered his hair with it, and lastly he took a mouthful of it, and so came out of the treasury "dragging his legs with difficulty, and looking like anything rather than a human being, as his mouth was choked up, and everything about him was in a plethoric state." When Croesus saw him he was highly amused, and gave him what he had taken and as much again. When Alcmaeon came home to Athens he found himself rich enough to enter as a competitor at the great Olympic games, and win the blue ribbon of that national festival—the four-horse chariot-race, which made the winner a hero in the eyes of his countrymen for ever.

Two generations afterwards this family made a splendid marriage. Cleisthenes of Sicyon had added this to his renown, that he too had been a victor at Olympia. Under these circumstances he was not inclined to throw away a beauty and heiress like his



daughter Agariste on the first comer, but, like the father in Goldoni's "*Matrimonio per concorso*," he proclaimed that she should be wooed and won by public competition. He invited all the most eligible youths in Greece to come and spend a year at his court, promising to give his decision when it had elapsed; and he prepared an arena expressly for the purpose of testing their athletic proficiency. Among the suitors was the exquisite Smyndrydes of Sybaris, the most luxurious man of the most luxurious Hellenic city. It was he who was said to have complained of the crumpled rose-leaf on his couch, and to have fainted when he once saw a man hard at work in the fields. He would certainly have broken down in the athletic ordeal. Not so Males, the brother of Titormus, a kind of human gorilla of enormous strength who lived in the wilds of Ætolia; but he would scarcely have been polished enough as a son-in-law for Cleisthenes. And the father might be loath to intrust his daughter to the son of Pheidon, the despot of Argos, a man notorious for rapacity and violence. The two Athenian candidates, Megacles son of Alcmaeon,* and Hippocleides, a member of the great rival family, were probably the favourites from the first; for it is hard to imagine that there was no betting on an occasion so tempting to the sporting characters of antiquity. Cleisthenes having first ascertained that his guests could give satisfactory references, made proof of their manhood, their tempers, their accomplishments, and their tastes,—sometimes bringing them altogether, sometimes holding private

* The son in this family took the grandfather's name: Megacles, Alcmaeon, Megacles, Alcmaeon, and so on. This was Alcmaeon II.


conversations with each. Although gymnastics were very important, he seemed to have laid most stress on their qualities as diners-out. The man who at the end of the year seemed, in the opinion of all, to have the best chance, was Hippocleides, who indeed was connected with the royal Cypselids of Corinth, as well as an Athenian of the highest fashion. When the great day arrived for the suitors to know their fate, Cleisthenes sacrificed a hundred oxen, and gave a public feast, to which he invited not only the foreign suitors, but all his own people. After the feast there was one more trial in music and in rhetoric,—probably to see how the suitors could carry their wine. As the cup went round, Hippocleides, abashing the rest of the party by his assurance, called to the flute-player to strike up a dance. Then he danced, in a manner which gave perfect satisfaction to himself, though Cleisthenes began to look grave. Next he ordered a table to be brought in, mounted on it, and rehearsed certain Laccian and Attic figures. To crown all, he stood on his head and kicked his legs in the air. This last performance, which Hippocleides might perhaps have learnt in his youth from the street-boys of the Piræus, was too much for Cleisthenes, who had long contained himself with difficulty. “Son of Tisander, thou hast danced away thy marriage,” he exclaimed, in fierce disgust. The other quietly answered, “Hippocleides does not care!” from which “Hippocleides don’t care” became a proverbial expression. Then, as Herodotus tells us, Cleisthenes rose and spoke to this effect :—

“Gentlemen, suitors of my daughter,—I am well pleased with you all—so well pleased that, if it were possible, I would make you all my sons-in-law. But as I

have but one daughter, that is unfortunately impossible. You have all done me much honour in desiring the alliance of my house. In consideration of this, and of the inconvenience to which you have been put in wasting your valuable time at my court, I beg to present you with a talent of silver each. But to Megacles, the son of Alcmaeon, I betroth my daughter Agariste to be his wife according to the usage of Athens."

The issue of this marriage was Cleisthenes, the great Athenian reformer, who was named after his maternal grandfather.

Pisistratus, the despot of Athens, has been already mentioned as contemporary with CROESUS. He won immortality by digesting the poems of Homer into a consecutive whole,—settling, as it were, the canon of the Greek Scriptures. His rule was just and mild, until his enemies forced greater severity upon him in his latter days. He was succeeded by his son Hippias. An abortive attempt to assassinate this prince was made by two men bound together by the tie of romantic friendship peculiar to the Greeks, Harmodius and Aristogeiton. This pair have always been celebrated as model patriots by the admirers of tyrannicide; but they bungled in their business by slaying the wrong brother, Hipparchus instead of Hippias, and only provoked Hippias to sterner measures of repression. At last the Alcmaeonids, growing weary of exile, made such strong interest with the god of Delphi that his oracle continually urged the Spartans to expel the Pisistratids. The clan, after a long struggle, were compelled to quit Athens, and retired to Sigeium, on the Hellespont, having selected this asylum as most convenient for intriguing with the Court of Persia for their restoration. They had ruled in



Athens from B.C. 560 to B.C. 510, which was about the date of the expulsion of the kings from Rome. They traced their origin to Codrus and Melanthus, semi-mythical kings of Attica, and remotely to the Homeric Nestor of Pylos, after whose son Pisistratus the great ruler of Athens was named.

A festival song in honour of the famous tyrannicides was long the "Marseillaise" of republican Athens:—

THE SWORD AND THE MYRTLE.

I'll wreath with myrtle-bough my sword,
Like those who struck down Athens' lord,
Our laws engrafting equal right on—
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

Harmodius dear, thou art not dead,
But in the happy isles, they say,
Where fleet Achilles lives for aye,
And good Tydeides Diomed.

I'll wreath my sword with myrtle-bough,
Like those who laid Hipparchus low,
When on Athenè's holiday
The tyrant wight they dared to slay.

Because they slew him, and because
They gave to Athens equal laws,
Eternal fame shall shed a light on
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

CHAPTER VIII.

IONIA.

"O for a tongue to curse the slave,
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,
Comes o'er the counsels of the brave,
And blasts them in their hour of might!"

—MOORE, "Fire-Worshippers."

DARIUS had not forgotten the good service done him by Histiaëus of Miletus, in preserving the Danube bridge for him on his hurried retreat from the Scythian expedition. He had given him a grant of land in Thrace, in a most desirable position for a new settlement. But he was afterwards persuaded that he had done wrong. A shrewd Greek would be tempted to form there the nucleus of an independent power. He therefore sent for Histiaëus, and detained him in an honourable captivity in his own court at Susa. And this detention led to the great Persian war.

There was a revolution in the little island of Naxos. "The men of substance," as they were literally called, were expelled, and came to Miletus begging Aristagoras, now deputy-governor in the absence of his father-in-law Histiaëus, to restore them. Thinking to get Naxos for himself, Aristagoras procured the aid of

a Persian flotilla. On the way, a quarrel arose about a Greek captain whom Megabates, the Persian admiral, had punished, because he found no watch set on board his ship. The punishment consisted in binding him down so that his head protruded from one of the ports or rowlocks, and Aristagoras had taken upon himself to release him. Megabates, in dudgeon, sent to warn the Naxians, who were to have been surprised, and the expedition failed. Then Aristagoras, finding himself unable to pay the expenses of the armament, as had been stipulated, thought of securing his position by the desperate expedient of stirring up a revolt at Miletus against Persia. He was confirmed in this resolution by the arrival of a singular courier from Histæus, who was determined at any cost to escape from the forced hospitalities of Susa. Histæus had taken a slave, shaved his head, punctured certain letters on the bare crown, then kept him till the hair was grown, and sent him to Aristagoras with merely the verbal message that he was to shave his head. When Aristagoras had played the barber, he found that the living despatch bore the word "revolt."

His first step was to proclaim democracy throughout the Greek confederacy. The different despots were given up to their fellow-citizens, to be dealt with according to their deserts. It speaks strongly in favour of the character of their "tyranny," that nearly all were dismissed uninjured. One only—Coes of Mytilene—was stoned to death. Aristagoras then set sail for Sparta to seek for aid. That state at this time enjoyed the singular constitution of a double monarchy. This may have had some mythological connection with the legend of the twin sons of Leda, Castor and

Pollux, who became sea-gods, from whom the constellation of the Gemini was named; but Herodotus assigns to it a different origin.

His tradition is that when the sons of Hercules reconquered their heritage of the Peloponnese, one of their three chiefs, Aristodemus, had the kingdom of Sparta for his share. His wife gave birth to twins just before his death. The boys were much alike; and the mother, hoping that they might both be kings, protested that she did not know them apart. The Spartans were puzzled; and the Delphic oracle gave an answer which hardly mended the matter, except so far that it satisfied the mother.

“Let both be kings, but let the elder have more honour.”

But which was the elder? that was the question. At last it was suggested that a watch should be set to see which the mother washed and fed first. If she acted on system, the case was clear. The espionage succeeded; the elder was discovered, and named Eurysthenes, and the other Procles. The two brothers, when they grew up, were said to have been always at variance, and their separate lines continued so ever after. The two kings had peculiar duties, rights, and privileges, but lived in the same plain way as other citizens.

When Aristagoras arrived at Sparta, he was admitted to an audience with the senior king, Cleomenes. He showed him a bronze tablet engraved with a chart—the earliest known map of the world—pointed out where all the different nations lay, and conjured him to assist his kinsmen the Ionians; observing, that it was foolish

for the Spartans to fritter away their force in local feuds, when they might be lords of Asia. As for the Persians, they were an easy prey—men who actually “went into battle with trousers on.” Cleomenes promised to give him an answer in three days. At the second interview he asked “how far it was to Susa?” Aristagoras was unguarded enough to say, “a three months’ journey;” on which Cleomenes ordered him to quit Sparta before sunset. Then he returned and sat before the king in the sacred guise of a suppliant, with an olive-bough in his hand. A little daughter of Cleomenes, named Gorgo, aged eight or nine, was standing at her father’s side. The Milesian wished her to be sent away, but Cleomenes told him to say on, and not to heed the child. Then Aristagoras began by offering ten talents, and as the king shook his head, increased them by degrees to fifty. When this sum was mentioned, the child cried out, “Go away, father, or the strange man will be sure to bribe thee.”* The “conscience of the king” was moved. He withdrew to escape the temptation, and the mission of Aristagoras failed at Sparta.

At Athens he had better chances of success. Athens was in the heyday of her first freedom. She had rid herself of her Tyrants, the Pisistratids, who were at

* Gorgo was well worthy to become, as she afterwards did, the wife of Leonidas. An incident in her married life, subsequently related by Herodotus, seems to militate against the dictum of Aristotle that the Spartan women were inferior to the men. All the authorities of Sparta were puzzled by the arrival of a waxen tablet (the usual form of a despatch) with nothing written on it. When Gorgo heard of it, she at once suggested that the wax should be scraped off, and the despatch was found engraven on the wood.

this moment intriguing with Persia, not without success, for their restoration. The feelings of the citizens towards these powerful absentees and their Asiatic friends were much the same as those of the French of 1792 towards the Emigration and its abettors. The two great ruling families were now the rival houses of Alcmaeon and Isagoras. Cleisthenes the Alcmaeonid, grandson of the tyrant of Sicyon, might not have thought it worth his while to court the people, had he not been determined to put down the rival faction which was led by Isagoras, brother of his father's rival Hippocleides, of dancing notoriety. As it was, he brought about a complete democratic revolution. He broke up the four old tribes, which were bound by family ties and sacred rites, and made ten new geographical divisions. This was as radical a change as the substitution of departments for provinces in France; and the introduction of the decimal system, in nearly every department of state at Athens, anticipated by more than two thousand years the work of the French Revolution. The Isagorids for a time turned the tables on the Alcmaeonids, by calling in the assistance of the Spartans, and Cleisthenes had only just defeated a dangerous confederacy against Athens. The Spartans had invaded Attica from Megara, when the Boeotians and Chalcidians broke in upon their northern frontier. But the usual jealousy between the two Spartan kings, and the defection of their Corinthian allies, dissolved the Spartan army, and left the Athenians at leisure to deal with their other enemies. They defeated the Boeotians with great slaughter, taking seven hundred prisoners; and crossing on the same day to Euboea, there obtained a second victory over the Chalcidians, in

whose lands they afterwards planted a military colony. The prisoners were ransomed, but their chains still hung in the citadel of Athens in the time of Herodotus on the walls blackened with Persian fire, and a handsome bronze quadriga stood by the gateway, which had been offered to Minerva from the tithe of the ransom. Its inscription was to this effect:—

“Armies of nations twain, Boeotia banded with Chalcis,
Sons of Athenian sires quelled in the labour of war,
Slaking their ardent pride in a dismal fetter of iron—
Then to the Maid for tithe gave we the chariot-and-four.”

The energy of Athens at this time struck Herodotus forcibly. It was like that of the French Jacobins when they had enemies on every frontier, and the Vendée and the Federals of the South on their hands besides. Great political changes give a nation a present sense of life and happiness, which is too often ultimately wrecked by selfishness, but which seems for a time to inspire superhuman strength. The worsted Thebans stirred up the little island of Ægina, which was always a thorn in the side of Athens till she had become mistress of the sea. There was a very old-standing feud about some sacred images or fetishes of olive-wood, representing the goddess Ceres and her daughter Persephone. No doubt their holiness was enhanced by their age and ugliness. Artistic beauty seems to have little to do with the sacredness of images, and in modern times in Italy an old black Madonna has been an object of peculiar veneration. The Zeus of Phidias and the Aphrodite of Praxiteles were not moulded by the hands of Faith.

The Athenians had just refused a demand of the

Persian satrap of Sardis for the restoration of their tyrant Hippias, when Aristagoras arrived. They received him with open arms, not only on account of this, but also because Miletus was their own colony; and despatched twenty ships—probably all they could spare from the Æginetan war—to aid the Milesians in their struggle against the yoke of Persia. These were joined by five galleys from Eretria in Eubœa, that city being under an obligation to the Milesians. The crews left their ships on the shore near Ephesus, and marched on and surprised Sardis, shutting up the Persians in the citadel. But Sardis proved to them a miniature Moscow. The town, mainly built of wood and reeds, caught fire, and the buccaneers thought it best to retreat as soon as a sack became out of the question. But the Persian forces caught them up near Ephesus, and inflicted severe punishment before they could reach their ships. The Ionian Greeks were now left to themselves by the Athenians, but the insurrection assumed large proportions, involving the whole Greek seaboard of Asia, many inland tribes, and lastly spreading to the island of Cyprus.

When Darius heard of the great revolt, and especially of the burning of Sardis, his wrath was greatly kindled against the Athenians. He took a bow and shot towards heaven, saying, "O Zeus! grant that I may be avenged on the Athenians!" He also appointed a slave to say to him thrice every day during dinner, "O king! remember the Athenians."* Then he sent

* There is a parallel symbolism in the case of Elisha and Joash (2 Kings xiii. 17): "Then Elisha said, Shoot; and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria."



for Histæus, telling him that he suspected he knew something about the business. But the Greek's innocent look and plausible words deceived the king, who was induced to send him to the coast—the very thing he had desired—to help to quell the insurrection. At Sardis Histæus found an astuter head to deal with. The satrap there was Artaphernes the king's brother. He said, "I see how it is, Histæus—thou hast stitched the shoe, and Aristagoras has put it on." But the adroit Ionian managed for the time to escape out of all his difficulties. He even outwitted Artaphernes so far, that, as Mr Grote supposes, he got him to execute a number of innocent Persians at Sardis, by opening a treasonable correspondence with them. The Milesians, however, would not receive him back as governor: he therefore persuaded the Lesbians to give him eight triremes, with which he took to piracy on his own account in the parts about the Hellespont. While marauding on the coast near Lesbos, he was defeated by a Persian force which happened to be there, and his captors, fearing lest the good-natured Darius might pardon him, put him to death at Sardis. Their fears were well founded; for when they sent his head to the king, Darius expressed much regret, and ordered it to be buried with all honour. This is quite consistent with the character of the Persian king as drawn by the prophet Daniel. It seems as if no one who had once done him a service could ever afterwards forfeit his good graces.

After reducing Cyprus, the Persians fell with their combined force on the Ionians and their allies. A victory won by the Greek fleet over the Phœnician sailors of Darius had no result of importance. The Carians

fought most valiantly, and cut off a whole Persian division by an ambuscade. Though they lost in one battle ten thousand men, yet their spirit was unbroken. Miletus, too, still held out gallantly. If any man under these circumstances ought to have shown an example of self-devotion, that man was Aristagoras. But nerve is inconsistent with levity of character. It often happens that the coward runs into the jaws of his fate, and so it happened to him. He abandoned the Ionian cause, and with some of his partisans sailed away for his father-in-law's new settlement in Thrace, where he was killed while besieging some petty town. He had been just in time to make his fruitless escape, for the Persians now proceeded to invest Miletus by land and sea. The allied Greeks decided on leaving it to defend itself by land, and concentrating their fleet at a small island off the coast. The allies counted in all three hundred and fifty triremes, which were confronted by six hundred in the service of Persia. The Persian commanders first tried to dissolve the hostile confederation by sending the deposed despots each to their own countrymen with promises of pardon on submission, and threats of extermination in case of prolonged resistance. The plan so far failed that it did not supersede the necessity of an action, for each separate state imagined itself the only one to which overtures were made. The Ionian captains, in their council of war, now agreed to put themselves all under the command of Dionysius of Phocæa. He set to work to put the ships in constant training, especially practising a manœuvre something like that of Nelson, — attacking the enemy's line in columns, and cutting through it. The invention of steam-rams seems likely to make the sea-fights

of the future more like those of the remote past than ever. The incidents of the *Merrimac's* battle and of *Lissa* recall the collisions of ancient navies, only that the oars of the galleys are superseded by steam-engines. Their sails were not used in action, as they would have only embarrassed the rowers. To sweep away a whole broadside of oars by cleverly shaving the enemy, and then turn sharply and ram him home on the quarter, was doubtless a favourite evolution of the best sailors. Dionysius was too much of a martinet for the self-indulgent Ionians. He kept them at sea all night—an unheard-of innovation—and at drill all day, and the days were terribly hot. They had not bargained for this when they chose him admiral. They began to murmur. "What god have we offended that we should be thus victimised? What fools we were to give ourselves up body and soul to this Phocæan bully, who commands but three ships of his own! We shall fall sick with the work and heat. The Persians can but make us slaves, and no slavery can well be worse than this. Let us mutiny." So they landed and encamped on the island, lolled in the shade all day, and refused to go on board any more. Then the Persian poison began to work. *Æaces*, the son of *Syloson*, lately tyrant of *Samos*, succeeded in persuading his countrymen to promise to desert, and they alone had sixty ships. Little could be hoped now from a general battle, but the battle took place. The *Samians* went off, all but eleven ships, whose stanch captains, like *Nelson* at *Copenhagen* with his blind eye to the telescope, would not see the signal of retreat. Most of the other allied squadrons, when they saw what the *Samians* were doing, imitated their bad example. The *Chian*

contingent, with the Samian eleven and a few others, maintained a desperate struggle. The hundred Chian ships, each with forty picked marines on board, charged repeatedly through the enemy's line. When they had taken many of his galleys, and lost half their own, such as were able made their way to their own island. Their damaged ships made for Mycalè, where the crews ran them ashore and marched to Ephesus. But ill fortune followed them. It was night, and the Ephesians were celebrating a feast, whose chief ceremony was a torch-light procession of women. Thinking them a party of freebooters come to carry off their wives and daughters, the citizens sallied out and cut them all to pieces. Dionysius the Phocæan had taken three ships, thus exactly doubling his own number. When he saw that the fight was lost, he made straight for the coast of Phœnicia, left undefended by the absence of their war-galleys, sank a number of merchantmen in the harbours, and gained by this booty the means of settling up handsomely as a corsair in Sicily, where he plundered Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians, but—with “a refinement of delicacy very unusual,” as Mr Rawlinson observes—let all Greek vessels go free.

The fall of Miletus soon followed the sea-fight. Most of the men were killed, and the women and children enslaved. The Athenians were deeply affected by the news, and when their poet Phrynichus brought on the stage his tragedy of the “Capture of Miletus,” the audience burst into tears, and he was fined a thousand drachmas (frances), and forbidden ever to exhibit it again. The revolt, which had now been desperately maintained for six years, was terribly expiated. The towns on the coast were as far as possible depopulated

(the people being sent to the interior) ; and the islands were traversed by lines of soldiers, who "netted" the inhabitants from one side to the other. Cities and temples were burnt to the ground. The Chians had been warned of coming evil by terrible portents. Of a hundred youths sent to Delphi, all but two had died of a pestilence ; and just before the great sea-fight off Miletus, the roof of a public school had fallen on the heads of the children of the principal citizens, and only one had escaped out of a hundred and twenty. In 1821 Europe was roused to sympathy for Greece by the horrors which this very island (Scio) suffered from the troops of the Capudan Pasha.

After a time the policy of the Persians changed towards Ionia, probably because Darius disapproved of the excessive severity which had been exercised ; and Mar-donius, his son-in-law, a young noble of great promise, was sent to depose once more the "tyrants," and establish democracies. These rulers had proved that they were not to be trusted. Having settled this business to the king's satisfaction, he was appointed to the command of a fleet and army whose destination was Athens and Eretria—for Darius had never forgotten their offence in the burning of Sardis. But the ulterior object of the expedition was the subjugation of all Greece.

As the Persian fleet was doubling Mount Athos, a north wind sprang up which terribly shattered it. Little short of three hundred wrecks and twenty thousand corpses were cast away on the rocky promontory. Many fell victims, says Herodotus, to sea-monsters—one of the additional perils of the deep in the imagination of ancient mariners ; those who could

not swim were drowned—and those who could, died of cold. Mardonius himself received a wound in an action on the mainland of Thrace, and the expedition returned home with its commander invalided. Darius immediately made fresh preparations, and sent heralds to all the Greek states to demand earth and water, in order that he might know what support to expect. It is to be hoped that the Athenians and Spartans did not disgrace themselves by throwing one of the heralds into a well and the other into a pit, and telling them to fetch earth and water thence; but such is the story. Darius himself would under no provocation have so forgotten his knighthood. Some years afterwards, the Spartans were said to have sent two of their citizens, who voluntarily offered themselves, to Susa, as an atonement for this outrage, for which they believed that the wrath of the hero Talthybius, the patron of heralds, lay heavy on them; but Xerxes, who was then king, would not accept the sacrifice, and dismissed them unhurt.

The Æginetans gave the earth and water to Darius, probably to spite the Athenians, who at once denounced them to the Spartans (who were as yet considered the leaders of Greece) as traitors to the national cause. The Spartan king Cleomenes went to Ægina to arrest the most guilty parties; but his mission there was foiled by his brother-king Demaratus, who was accusing him at home. In retaliation, Cleomenes attempted to prove that Demaratus was illegitimate. His mother was the loveliest woman in Sparta. She had been ugly in her childhood, but was changed into a beauty by her nurse taking her daily to the temple of Helen.

There a mysterious lady—"tall as the gods, and most divinely fair"—one day laid her hand on the child, whose looks from that time forth began to amend. In due time she had been married to a noble Spartan; but Ariston the king fell in love with her, and got her from her husband, who was his greatest friend, by a ruse. He proposed to exchange their most precious possessions, and they ratified the compact by an oath. Ariston straightway demanded his friend's wife. Thus taken off his guard, and bound by his oath, the husband unwillingly resigned her. But from circumstances connected with the birth of the child Demaratus, he was supposed by some to be not the son of Ariston, but of her former husband. Cleomenes found a powerful ally in Leotychides, the next heir, who was a deadly enemy of Demaratus, and the suit was carried on in his name. The inevitable oracle of Delphi was the last court of appeal; and the priestess, being bribed by Cleomenes, pronounced against Demaratus, who was then deposed, and ultimately driven from Sparta by the taunts of Leotychides. He made his way to that paradise of refugees, the hospitable court of Darius, who gave him lands and cities. He had stood very high in the estimation of his countrymen, as having been the only Spartan who had won the four-horse chariot-race at Olympia.

When Cleomenes had thus worked his will on Demaratus, he took Leotychides, his new associate on the throne, with him to Ægina, where he arrested two of the principal citizens, as guilty of treason against the liberty of Greece, and deposited them as hostages with their bitter enemies the Athenians. But his own end was near. Rumour accused him of underhand practices

against Demaratus, and he fled into Arcadia, where he began to hatch a conspiracy against Sparta. The Spartans in alarm called him home to his former honours. He had always been eccentric; he now became a maniac. He would dash his staff in the face of every citizen he met. At last his friends put him in the stocks—a wholesome instrument of restraint, as common there as in our own country within the last century. Finding himself alone one day with his keeper, he asked for a knife. The Helot did not dare to refuse the king, though a prisoner. Then he committed suicide in a manner which, though effected more clumsily, resembled the “Happy Despatch” of the Japanese.

✓ The madness of Cleomenes, like that of Cambyeses, was generally supposed to have been a judgment on his impiety. Herodotus thought his treatment of Demaratus enough to account for it; but other charges equally grave were brought against him. He had bribed the Pythian priestess. He had roasted alive some fifty Argives who had taken refuge in a sacred grove, during his invasion of Argolis, by burning the grove itself. He had scourged Argive priests for not allowing him, a foreigner, to sacrifice in the temple of Juno. He had been in the habit of entering forbidden temples, and generally of making a parade of reckless irreligion. The Spartans themselves, however, gave a more naturalistic account of the cause of his madness. Certain Scythian ambassadors, who were staying at Sparta to negotiate a league against Darius, had induced the king to adopt the habit of taking his wine without water like themselves. “To drink like a Scythian” was a proverb. The case of Cambyeses, as we have seen, admitted of the like explanation.

When Cleomenes was dead, the Æginetans sent to Sparta to complain of Leotychides about their hostages, who were still in custody with the Athenians. Leotychides, who was not popular, narrowly escaped being given up as a hostage in their stead ; but, in the end, he was duly sent to Athens to demand their release. The Athenians refused to give them up, saying that as two kings had placed them there, they could not give them up to one. They certainly would have had the English law of trusteeship on their side. Leotychides, however, read them a striking lesson on the sacredness of trusts. He told them how one Glaucus, a Spartan, had once consulted the oracle at Delphi as to restoring a deposit of money to its rightful owner. He had the audacity to ask whether he might venture to purge himself by an oath, according to the Greek law, and so keep the money. The Pythoness gave answer in these warning words :—

“ O Glaucus, gold is good to win,
And a false oath is easy sin ;
Swear—an thou wilt : death follows both
The righteous and unrighteous oath :
But Perjury breeds an awful Birth,
That hath no name in heaven or earth ;
Strong without hands, swift without feet,
It tracks the pathway of deceit—
Sweeps its whole household from the land ;
Only the just man's house shall stand.”

When Glaucus heard these words, he at once restored the money, and sent to beg of the god that the thought of his heart might be forgiven him. The oracle replied that to tempt heaven with such a question was as bad as to commit the sin. “ And now,” said the

Spartan king, "mark my words, men of Athens; at this day there is none of Glaucus' race left in Sparta: they have perished, root and branch."

The Athenians, however, turned a deaf ear to the solemn monition. In return for their stubbornness, the Æginetans laid wait for and captured the Sacred Galley which carried the Athenian embassy to Delos periodically, and threw the envoys (men of the highest rank) into prison. A fierce war of reprisals was entered upon, of which perhaps the most remarkable characteristic is the poverty of the Athenians of the period in ships. They were obliged to beg twenty galleys of their friends the Corinthians, who, as it was against the law to give them, generously sold the whole for a hundred drachmæ—about five francs apiece.

Leotychides might have served to point the moral of his own remarkable anecdote. He reaped little happiness from the successful plot by which he had supplanted Demaratus. After seeing his only son die before him, he ended his own days in exile, having been banished from Sparta for the disgraceful crime of taking bribes from the enemy during a war with the Thessalians. The evident satisfaction with which Herodotus, here as elsewhere, traces the course of retributive justice, is highly characteristic of the historian.


CHAPTER IX.

MARATHON.

"The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow !
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear !
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below !
Such was the scene."

—BYRON, "Childe Harold."

As the first expedition against Greece under Mardonius had ended in disaster, Darius thought it best to let the young commander gain experience before he was intrusted with the conduct of another ; possibly, also, his wound was long in healing. The second armada was put under the command of Datis, a Mede of mature years, and Artaphernes, nephew of the king. They had express orders to bring the Athenians and Eretrians into the royal presence in chains. The whole flotilla—six hundred war-ships, besides transports—struck straight across sea, through the Archipelago, not caring again to tempt the dangers of Athos. After sacking Naxos, they came to the sacred island of Delos, the birthplace of the twin deities Apollo and Diana. Fortunately for the inhabitants, the senior commander was a Median ritualist, not an iconoclast like Cambyses, and the sacred island was more than spared.



Herodotus mentions an earthquake as occurring soon after this visit, and Thucydides another ; and the story of the island having once floated about at large, before it became fixed, is doubtless connected with its volcanic origin. The Persian armament swept like a blight through the other islands, and soon appeared off the coast of Euboea. Meeting with no resistance on landing, they disembarked their cavalry, and laid siege to Eretria, which was betrayed to them after six days of severe fighting. The town was burnt and sacked, and the inhabitants carried away captive. They expected from the threats of Darius the worst of fates ; but when they reached Susa, that forgiving monarch settled them peaceably at a place called Ardericca, where there was a famous well which produced salt, bitumen, and petroleum. Herodotus saw them there, and mentions particularly that they had not forgotten their Greek.

The Athenians, after the fall of Eretria, must have felt much as the Jews did when Sennacherib appeared before their walls, and Rabshakeh boasted that all the kings and gods on his march had fallen before him. But when they heard that the Persians had actually disembarked at Marathon, they must have felt as England would have felt had the news come that Buonaparte had landed in Pevensey Bay, close to the ominous field of Hastings. For Marathon had not as yet become a synonym for Victory ; on the contrary, Pisistratus had beaten the Athenian commons on that plain, and his son Hippias was now with the Persian host in a temper which, they might be sure, had not improved with old age, exile, and disappointment.

It was Hippias who, from old association, and thinking the plain well suited for cavalry manœuvres, had guided the Persians to the strand of Marathon (now Vrana). The plain itself is shaped somewhat like a thin crescent, the sea washing its concavity, and mountains rising behind its convex rim, which opens out at the back into two valleys. Between both a spur runs out, commanding the two gaps. The slope of this spur was the key of the Athenian position. The extent of level ground is about six miles long, as measured by the curve of the bay, and about a mile and a half broad. But although along the whole of the six miles there is a fine sandy beach for landing, behind it, a considerable part—more than a third—of the crescent-plain is occupied by two swamps, one of which is of considerable extent. Here the Persian army awaited the mustering of the Athenians. Why they did not push on at once into the country is a mystery.

It so chanced that, just before the Persians came, a heaven-sent commander dropped, as it were, from the clouds into the fortunate city of Athens. The spirits of men rose when it was rumoured that Miltiades, the son of Cimon, had come home. Herodotus gives us his family history, which was curious enough.

The Chersonese is a tongue of land jutting into the sea from the Thracian mainland. Its people being annoyed by the intursions of some savages to the north, as the Britons were by the Picts and Scots, sent a deputation to the oracle at Delphi to ask for advice. The god told them to choose as king the first man who should welcome them to his house. For some time they traversed almost hopelessly various parts

of Greece ; but Greek respectability was not likely to invite into its sanctuary a party of strangers "dressed in outlandish garments, and carrying long spears in their hands." At last in Attica they passed by the countryhouse of one Miltiades, son of Cypselus (a descendant of the hero of the "meal-bin").* The democratic Tyranny had deprived him of occupation, for he was a nobleman of the old school, who came of "a four-horse family," says our historian—had won, indeed, the great Olympic race himself—who traced his pedigree back to Ajax, and was connected with the proud Isagorids. So he sat idle in his porch, heartily sick of Pisistratus and democratic respectability. Seeing the foreign wayfarers pass, out of mere curiosity, as it would seem, he invited them into his house and entertained them. The interview was satisfactory ; Miltiades consented to take out a few colonists with them to their wilds, and be their king. The first thing he did was to build them a kind of Hadrian's wall to keep back their Picts and Scots. His nephew, Stesagoras, the son of Cimon, succeeded him, and was succeeded, on his violent death, by his brother, this second Miltiades, who came out from Athens, and made himself by a *coup d'état* despot of the whole Chersonese—a great sin in the eyes of his democratic countrymen, who brought him to trial for it when he came to Athens, but condoned it on account of his services to the state. When the Persians, in their march of vengeance after the Ionian revolt, came to the Hellespont, he ran the gauntlet of their fleet successfully with five galleys ; but he left in their hands one ship, on board of which was his son. As Miltiades had advised the king's bridge

* See p. 103.

over the Danube to be destroyed, his captors thought, when they sent the youth to Darius, that he would punish the father in his person ; but, with his usual magnanimity, the king gave him a house and estate, and a Persian wife, by whom he became the founder of a Persian family.

Miltiades, immediately on his return to Athens, was impeached by his democratic enemies for "tyranny" in his colony ; but, having cleared his character, he was at once appointed one of the ten Athenian generals, of whom Callimachus, the polemarch, or minister of war, was another. They could not have been much more than colonels, except on the days when they held the command in rotation ; an arrangement which, to our English notions, would be fatal to the success of any great enterprise. The Athenians were as fond of decimals as the Persians of the number seven. A traditional 10,000 Athenians were engaged on the Greek side at Marathon. But the Greeks were apt to underestimate their own numbers and exaggerate those of the enemy. Supposing the Persian force to amount in all to 200,000 men, making deductions for the guard of the ships and the absent cavalry, they probably brought not many more than 110,000 into the field, of whom 30,000 were heavy armed. The Athenian light armed must also be reckoned, and if their whole force is put at 18,000, with 2000 Plateæans, the odds still leave abundant room for Hellenic self-glorification. Before the Athenians left their city, they had sent to Sparta for succour. Their courier is said to have reached Sparta on foot—a distance of 140 English miles—on the second day. But the Spartans had an inveterate superstition against marching until the

moon was full. They were possibly in no great hurry to help Athens, as, when they did come, it was too late, and only with two thousand men. The Athenians had already drawn up their line of battle in the sacred close of Hercules, at Marathon, when they were joined by the Plataeans. The Plataeans had suffered much in time past from their neighbours the Thebans, and in return for substantial protection had bound themselves to Athens; in fact the little state became a satellite of the greater.

The Greek forces seem to have occupied the space between Mount Kotroni and Argaliki, resting their wings against the heights, which prevented their being outflanked. There was hesitation as to beginning the attack. On the one hand, the Athenians rested on their own supplies, and could take their time; and the Spartan contingent, though tardy, might be expected to march in six days, when the moon would be at the full. On the other hand, treachery was feared from the party of Hippias in Athens, if there was any delay. The generals were equally divided, but Miltiades was for immediate action, and persuaded Callimachus to give his casting-vote with him. By what arrangement it happened is not clear, but it is certain that when the day for action came, the command was in the hands of Miltiades. Why the attack was made on the particular day it is difficult to determine. Some suppose that Miltiades, with an inspiration like that of Wellington at Salamanca, saw his advantage in a temporary absence of the Persian cavalry. Certain it is that no cavalry are heard of in the action, which seems singular, as Hippias is said to have chosen the spot for their bene-

fit.* The armies stood fronting each other. Callimachus was on the right wing, and the Plateans on the left. The right was always the post of honour and of danger, because the last man had his side unprotected by a shield. When the Greek line was formed, it appeared too short as compared with that of the Persians; so Miltiades, no doubt with some misgivings, drew troops from his centre and massed them on the wings, in order that they might deploy when they came into the open. There was nearly a mile of ground to be cleared before arriving at the enemy's line; and it was advisable to lose as few men as possible from arrows before coming to the thrust of spears. Miltiades therefore gave the signal to charge at quick step, which was increased to a run when within range. The Persians, on their side, prepared to give them a warm reception, though they thought the Greeks mad for charging so wildly, unsupported by archers or cavalry. But they had scarcely time for admiration of their enemies before they were in upon them. The two armies wrestled long and desperately before advantage declared itself for either. At last the swaying line of combat parted into three fragments, which moved in different directions. In the centre, where the Persians and Sacæ were posted, the Athenians were rolled back, probably no farther than the slope of Kotroni, where they could stand at bay, though Herodotus says they were pursued up the valley. On the wings they were


* Mr Blakesley thinks that they had not yet been disembarked, but were still at Eretria; and perhaps it was for this reason that the Persians kept their position close to the shore for so long a time, and did not attempt to outflank by the hills an enemy numerically so inferior.

victorious ; and the allies of the Persians who were there, retiring creditably enough, with their faces to the enemy, did not see the marshes behind them, but floundered into them backwards. There was struggling to regain a footing, and general confusion, of which the Greeks took advantage, and pressed them harder till they were hopelessly broken and discomfited. But the victorious wings now perceived that their own centre was dislocated from them, and had lost ground before the *élite* of the Persian army ; they therefore faced about and fell on their flanks. The Persian centre, now engaged on three sides, at last gave way likewise, and fell back in the direction of their galleys. Covered probably by the archers from the decks, most of the troops got safe on board. Then the Greeks raised a yell of disappointment, called for fire to burn the ships, and many rushed into the water to try to board them. One of the foremost of these was Cynegirus, brother to the poet *Æschylus* ; but as he grasped the stern-ornament of a trireme, he dropt back with both his hands chopped off. Some say that he maintained his hold until he lost first one hand, then the other, and lastly his head, as he caught the gunwale with his teeth.

So ended the immortal battle of Marathon, which stands almost alone by the side of Morgarten among the miracles achieved by the inspiration of Freedom. The Persians were sufficiently beaten, but their rout could hardly have been so complete as Herodotus describes, since they had not far to run. They lost six thousand four hundred men, mostly in the swamps, and seven galleys, held back by main force or carried by boarding. It was in the fight at the ships that, besides

Cynegeirus, many Athenians of note fell, amongst them two of the generals, one of whom was Callimachus. The Athenians lost one hundred and ninety-two men in the action. As the greater number are said to have fallen in the attack on the ships, either those who gave way before the Persians and Sacæ were few, or they only suffered a partial repulse. Greek armies, from their formation in compact phalanx, seldom lost many men until they were broken, when their long spears and heavy armament rendered them more defenceless than lighter troops. Marathon afterwards became a household word at Athens, as Waterloo with us. A "man who had fought at Marathon" had a patent of popular nobility. Athenian orators made it a favourite commonplace; and Athenian satirists found it an inexhaustible fund of jest upon the national vanity. Wonderful stories were related in connection with the battle. On the return of Pheidippides the courier from Sparta, he said that as he was crossing a mountain in Arcadia he was accosted by the wood-god Pan, who called to him by name, and complained of his worship being neglected by the Athenians, while he was always well disposed towards them. In consequence, a temple was dedicated to Pan under the Acropolis, and he was honoured with annual sacrifices and a torch-race. National heroes were supposed to have been present, and to have assisted in the fight; and one Athenian was suddenly struck blind in the thick of the fray by (as he declared) the passing before his eyes of a supernatural giant, who slew the man at his side.

When the Persians had re-embarked, their fleet doubled Cape Sunium, and made a demonstration in the direction of the harbour of Athens, with the hope



of surprising the city ; but the Athenians returned in time to cover it. There was an ugly rumour, which Herodotus entirely disbelieves, that a shield was hoisted on the walls as a telegraphic signal by the Alcmaeonids. This, doubtless, emanated from the opposite faction ; for the Isagorids and Alcmaeonids of Athens hated each other as cordially, and slandered each other as unscrupulously, as the English Tories and Whigs of the time of Queen Anne.

The tale of the subsequent fate of Miltiades is one of the most painful passages in history. In the first flush of his popularity, he asked the Athenians to give him seventy ships fully equipped, only deigning to tell them that he would get them gold in abundance. They asked no questions, but gave him the fleet. He had a private grudge against the people of Paros, and he now sailed to the island of marble, and laid siege to its town. His patience began to be at an end, when a certain priestess offered to forward his views. In leaping the wall of the sacred precincts after an interview with her, he dislocated his thigh. He then returned to Athens disabled, and as soon as he arrived was put upon his trial on the capital charge of having deceived the state, his accuser being Xanthippus, father of the great Pericles. The crippled hero lay on a couch in court while his friends defended him. They could not say a word in extenuation of the Parian escapade, but rested his defence on the fact that he had saved Athens at Marathon, and regained Lemnos. But, unfortunately for Miltiades, this was not the first time that he had had to appear on a charge of like nature. It seemed as if he wished to make himself despot of Paros—perhaps even despot of

Athens—as he had made himself despot of the Chersonese. It was not for this that they had got rid of Hippias. If he commanded well at Marathon, so did the other generals, two of them now no more ; nay, every man who fought in those ranks seemed as good a hero as he, for Marathon, like Inkermann, was a “soldier’s battle.” If he took Lemnos, he had missed taking Paros, and wasted the public money at a time when the treasury was low. They had not the heart to condemn him to death, for as he lay before them he seemed to bear death’s mark already—and, indeed, it must have appeared to them as impossible as for the king of Italy to punish Garibaldi for treason after his wound at Aspromonte ; but they condemned him in the expenses of the abortive expedition, amounting to fifty talents (above £12,000). As his son Cimon was able to pay these heavy damages, his judges seem to have had no intention of absolutely ruining him. Soon afterwards, physical mortification in the injured limb, assisted no doubt by mental, put an untimely end to the days of the Man of Marathon.

CHAPTER X.

THERMOPYLÆ.

"Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner, and bugle, and fife,
To the death, for their native land."

—TENNYSON, "Maud."

AFTER the terrible defeat of his best generals at Marathon, Darius thought the Athenians worth his personal attention. That battle took place in the autumn of B.C. 490; and the king occupied the next three years in preparations for a new expedition, which he intended to lead in person. But a revolt in Egypt divided his attention; and he was considering in which direction he was most wanted, when he was summoned from the scene by a mightier monarch than himself, after a reign of six-and-thirty years. His fourth son, Xerxes, succeeded him—not his first-born, Artabazanes; because Xerxes had been born in the purple, and of a daughter of Cyrus; whereas the elder sons had been born when Darius was a subject, and of the daughter of a subject. Xerxes soon disposed of the Egyptian revolt, and left his brother Achæmenes satrap of the country. Then he took up the great quarrel bequeathed

him by his father, but after many hesitations and vacillations, signified in the narrative of Herodotus by dreams and their interpretations, and opposite opinions said to have been given by Artabanus, who dissuaded, and Mardonius, who was in favour of an invasion. The young king was evidently afraid of compromising his newly-inherited prosperity. He was of a luxurious character, not craving, like Darius, for barren honour; and if he left the Greeks alone, it would be a long time before they found their way to Susa. When the bolder counsels at last prevailed, he resolved to make matters as safe as possible. Grecian liberty was not to be stabbed, but stifled, to death. He would pour out all Asia upon it. So he took four good years in preparation, gathering a host of armed, half-armed, and almost unarmed men, such as has hardly been seen before or since. The soldiers, with the exception of the select few, carried the rudest national weapons—bows and arrows, pole-axes, “morning-stars,” even staves and lassoos. Some rate the host as high as five millions; others give less than half that number. The men were measured, like dry goods—not counted; that is, a pen was made which could hold ten thousand, through which the whole army passed in successive batches. It is time, perhaps, that a common error should be exploded, into which, however, it would be impossible for any attentive reader of Herodotus to fall. No schoolboy believes now, as elderly men did when they were boys, that the French are a nation of cowards. But it is possible for careless readers of Greek history to believe that the Persians were cowards; else, they might say, how should they have been beaten by

so small a number of Greeks? And were they not obliged to flog their soldiers into action? Perhaps this was only a Greek version of the fact that corporal punishment was an institution in their army. Amongst the Greeks it was confined to slaves. The lash has not prevented Russians and Austrians—not to mention others—from fighting well. Perhaps the native Persians, especially those of noble birth, were personally braver than the Greeks. But the Greeks had the immense advantage of discipline. In a disciplined army every man has the eyes of his comrades on him, and if fear is felt, it cannot act for very shame, and because it is counteracted by mechanical obedience. Aristotle assigns a special kind of courage to national militias, which all Greek armies were, which he calls the political courage, springing from the feeling of what is due from the individual to the community. This may not be courage of the most romantic kind, but it appears to answer its end perfectly; and Nelson thought it good enough to appeal to in his famous watchword, still written round the wheel of our war-ships—"England expects every man to do his duty." This kind of courage culminated in Leonidas. The Persian officers were even desperately brave, and always led the charges in person, which accounts for their great relative loss in battles. The Greek officers took their chance with the rest, being indistinguishable from the privates in the phalanx. Again, the numbers of their armies were a positive disadvantage to the Persians; for most of their auxiliary troops, when brought into contact with real soldiers, were as sheep brought to the shambles. The Greeks were also more efficiently armed. The Persian infantry were archers, carrying also pikes and daggers, who (like

the English crossbow-man with his pavoise-bearer in the fifteenth century) made a bulwark of their great oblong wicker shields, as may be seen now in the Nimrud sculptures, and shot from behind them. But when this bulwark was once forced, the Persians had no protection but their light armour against the strong pikes of the Greeks. Our archers turned the scale of battle against superior forces at Cressy and Poitiers, because they were the only body which had at all the character of regular troops.

The Persian officers had in some respects become luxurious and effeminate even in the time of Darius, riding in palanquins, keeping sumpter-camels, and so forth; but they do not appear to have been worse than our Anglo-Indians, who have never been reckoned deficient in valour. The French *mousquetaires*, who fought under Marshal Saxe, were as celebrated for their foppery as their gallantry in the field. "Hold hard—the dandies are coming!" was the word passed from one British soldier to another, when their laced coats and three-cornered hats came in sight.

There is no need to follow in detail all the pomp and circumstance of the slow march of Xerxes into Greece. The vast army crossed from Abydos to Sestos by a double pontoon bridge; and Xerxes, like the spoiled child of the harem, is said to have ordered the Hellespont to be scourged, and chains to be thrown into it, and branding-irons to be plunged into the hissing water, because a storm had destroyed the work when first attempted. He is also said to have cut in halves the eldest son of a wealthy Lydian, who had made him an offer of all his property, but requested that one of his sons might be left behind; making his troops defile

between the severed portions, by way of raising their enthusiasm. A similar story is told of Darius, which appears, in his case, incredible. The great interest of the expedition begins when it arrived where resistance might be expected from the Greeks. The land-force which marched round the coast was accompanied by more than twelve hundred war-galleys, besides a multitude of other craft. The navy passed through a new-made ship-canal, by which the voyage round the formidable headland of Athos was avoided. Our author says the work was done in mere bravado, since the ships might have been drawn across the narrow neck of land with less labour and cost. It is remarkable, in the cutting of this canal (a work of three years, the traces of which are still distinctly visible), that all the other nations were senseless enough to make its sides perpendicular, which, from the continual landslips, gave them double trouble ; while the Phœnicians alone proved themselves as good "navvies" as navigators, by making their cutting twice as broad at top as at bottom.

The news of the approach of this overwhelming host struck the Greeks with consternation, and all the northern tribes, including the Thebans, submitted to the invader. The Athenians were alarmed by dark oracles pointing apparently to their extermination, but containing one saving clause, that they might find safety in their "wooden walls." They wisely interpreted this to mean their ships. Their troublesome war with the Æginetans proved now an advantage, as it had forced them to make large additions to their navy, the former poverty of which has been mentioned. Envoys were sent for aid to Argos, Sicily, Corcyra, and Crete. The Argives might be well excused for declining, as Cleo-

menes had just massacred six thousand out of their not probably more than ten thousand citizens. Gelon, the king of Syracuse, would have assisted, had not Sicily been just then invaded by a miscellaneous army of three hundred thousand men under the command of the Carthaginian Hamilcar, possibly induced, through the Phœnicians, to make this diversion in favour of Xerxes. Gelon had the good fortune to destroy this host in the decisive battle of Himera, on the same day as the Greek victory at Salamis. The Corcyræans temporised, with their historical selfishness ; the Cretans excused themselves on the faith of an oracle ; so the Greeks proper were left to face their terrible enemy alone, and even among them there were many craven spirits who took the side of the Persian.

Thessaly, through which the course of the invaders lay, is a basin of mountains, like Bohemia, cracked by the gorge of the Peneus, as Bohemia is by that of the Elbe. This basin was doubtless, as Herodotus says, once a lake, until it was tapped by some convulsion of nature. Xerxes thought flooding the country quite feasible, by damming up the outlet of the river : no such measure, however, was necessary. At first the Greeks had intended to make their stand there, in the Vale of Tempe, celebrated for its beauty. Overhung by plane-woods, the high cliffs are festooned with creepers, and diversified with underwood, approaching here and there so closely as to leave barely room for the road and river. But they gave up this position when they found that Thessaly could easily be entered by another road over the mountains. They drew back towards the isthmus : and Thessaly at once made terms with the Persian king.

It was now decided to make the first stand at the narrow pass of Thermopylæ (Hotwells-Gate), the key of Greece itself. The river Spercheius has since established a tract of alluvial deposit between the mountain and the sea, but the hot springs are still there, in pools of clear water, and the other features of the scene remain much as they were in the time of Herodotus. The pass leads along the shore from Thessaly to Locris. The Grecian fleet were to support the army in the narrow strait by Artemisium, on the head of Eubœa (Negropont). As the Persian host rolled on, it had increased like a snowball, imbibing the contingents of all the districts that submitted. But the elements were still against the invaders. A storm arose when their fleet was off Magnesia, attributed by the Athenians to the intervention of Boreas (the North Wind), who had married a daughter of their mythical king Erechtheus. At least four hundred galleys perished, and so much wealth was cast ashore that the wreckers on the coast became rich men; and the Persians soon after lost fifteen ships more, which mistook the enemy's fleet for their own. Xerxes was himself with the land-force, which had now occupied the territory of Trachis, north of the pass of Thermopylæ. The little Greek army had posted itself behind an ancient wall, which barred the pass, and which they had repaired, at a spot where there was only room for a single chariot-road. The nucleus of the force (in all under 8000 of all arms) was three hundred thorough-bred Spartans, each attended by his seven Helots. They were all fathers of families, who had left sons at home to succeed them. At their head was Leonidas, now senior king of Sparta. This

small force was expected to be able to hold the pass until the rest were disengaged ; for the Spartans were keeping a local feast, and the other Greeks were engaged at the great Olympian festival. Perhaps the very extremity of the danger made the Greeks put their religious duties in the foreground ; and, indeed, Leonidas and his men went out as to an expected sacrifice. A Persian scout reported to Xerxes that he found the Spartans busy dressing their hair. In surprise the king appealed for explanation to his refugee guest Demaratus, the banished king of Sparta, whom he had brought to Greece in his train. The Spartan warned him that it betokened, on the part of his countrymen, a resistance to the death. Usually careless of their dress, there was one occasion when they polished their arms, combed their long hair and wreathed it with flowers, and put on scarlet vests ; it was when they expected a battle which they might not survive. Xerxes waited four days to see if they would retire, and then ordered his Medes and Cissians to bring them to him in chains. For a whole day these made repeated attacks, and were as often repulsed with heavy loss. The Persian "Immortals" were then launched at them, and fared no better. These troops were so called because they were always kept up to the exact number of ten thousand,* and represented the Imperial Guard. Often pretending flight, so as to draw them on in loose pursuit, the Greeks turned on their enemies and butchered them. One would have thought that this affair in the front would have made little impression on that dense host ; but

* The forty members of the French Academy are so nicknamed for the same reason.

Xerxes is said to have leapt thrice from his throne as the wave of disturbance reached him, fearing for his whole army. On the third day a native guide came and told the king of a pass over the mountains, by which the Greeks might be taken in rear, and he selected Hydarnes, the commander of the Immortals, for this important service. The crest of this pass (the existence of which the Greeks had learned too late) was watched on their behalf by a thousand Phocians, who were warned by hearing the rustling of the dry leaves of the oak-wood, but thinking an attack on their own post was intended, retired to a more defensible position, and let Hydarnes pass on. The way in which the little band of heroes received the announcement that their position had been turned should be told in Herodotus's own words :—

“First, the soothsayer Megistias, as he inspected the sacrifices, warned them of the death which awaited them with the morrow's dawn. Then came some deserters, who told them of the march of the Persians round the hill. All this was while it was still night. Then, when the day had broken, their scouts came running down from the heights with the same news. Thereupon the Greeks took counsel, and their opinions were divided : for some would not hear of quitting their post, while others advised to do so. Then they parted asunder, and some went off and dispersed each to their own cities, and some prepared to remain there with Leonidas. It is even said that Leonidas himself sent them away, anxious that they should not be slain ; but for himself and the Spartans who were there, it was not seemly, he said, for them to leave a post which they had once undertaken to keep.”

Those who chose the nobler alternative, besides the Spartans and their Laconian subjects and Helot slaves, who could not help themselves, were seven hundred Thespians and four hundred Thebans—the latter, our author says, detained as hostages, but probably proscribed at home for refusing to submit, like the rest, to Xerxes. The struggle now could have but one issue. Xerxes ordered a general attack at daybreak, and Leonidas, in order to sell the lives of his men as dearly as possible, ordered them to advance from the defile itself, and attack in the open. The Persians perished in crowds—some driven into the sea, some trampled to death by their comrades, others urged forward by stripes only to fall on the deadly lances of the Greeks.

Dead weight, however, began to tell against the latter, when they had broken their spears in barbarian bodies, and had used their swords till they were weary. At last Leonidas fell, and over his body the struggle was renewed more furiously than ever.

“The dead around him on that day
In a semicircle lay.”

In that swathe of corpses were found two brothers of Xerxes. Four times the Greeks repulsed the enemy, and at last bore off the body of their king. They had but short breathing-space. Their hour was come, when the fatal troops of Hydarnes came down the hills in their rear. The survivors drew back into the narrowest part of the pass, within the wall, and posted themselves on a hillock, where a stone lion afterwards marked the resting-place of Leonidas. So did the sur-

vivors of the Khyber Pass massacre in 1841 draw together for a last stand on the hillock at Gundamuck, whence a single officer escaped to Peshawur to tell that the British army was exterminated.

The four hundred Thebans saved themselves by a timely surrender; the remaining four thousand Greeks were buried in a hail-shower of missiles. Herodotus awards the palm of valour to a Spartan wit, who, when he was told that the Persian arrows would darken the air, said, "Then we shall have but a shadow-fight" (or sham-fight). Such a man would have appreciated the ghastly witticisms of the guillotine in the French Revolution. Xerxes, with an indecency towards the dead quite opposed to all Persian usage, had the head of Leonidas cut off, and fixed upon a pole.

The Greek combined fleet was commanded by the Spartan Eurybiades. The Spartans would only co-operate on condition that the command should be theirs, though they only furnished ten ships, while the Athenians mustered one hundred and twenty-seven. Spartan provincialism forms a strong contrast to the national patriotism of the little state of Plataea, which threw itself heart and soul into the cause of Greek independence. Though landsmen, the Plataeans helped to man the Athenian fleet. They were afterwards rewarded by vile ingratitude from Sparta, and lukewarm friendship from Athens.

The whole naval strength counted two hundred and seventy-one three-banked galleys. The Persian disaster in the storm had now been balanced by a Greek disaster in the field; and the barometer of Hellenic confidence fell again. There was even talk of

leaving Eubœa to its fate, and retreating southwards. Themistocles, the Athenian commander, was a man who had raised himself to a foremost position from small beginnings, which may account for his understanding so well the use and power of money. If Mammon was one of his gods, he could make him his servant for good as well as for evil. The Eubœans, alarmed for their families and goods, besought the Spartan admiral not to desert them; and finding him impracticable, applied to Themistocles—this time backing their prayers with a present of thirty talents. Themistocles knew Eurybiades better than they, and gave him five talents out of the thirty, as if they had come from himself, or from the treasury of the Athenians, and three more to Adeimantus the Corinthian, whose valour, among all the national commanders, seemed most strongly tempered with discretion. The rest of this secret-service money he kept for himself.

The Persians, in great fear lest the Greek fleet should escape them under cover of night, detached two hundred ships, with orders to sail round outside Eubœa, and back up the strait between the island and the mainland, and so block in the enemy.

The battle—or rather battles, for there were three—of Artemisium began by desultory and provocative attacks on the part of the Greeks, who, when they had brought the whole Persian fleet upon them, rolled theirs up like a hedgehog or porcupine, with the spines outside. They drew their sterns all together, and formed a circle with their sharp beaks turned every way. In the first *mêlée* thirty ships were taken from the Persians. The battle lasted through the mid-summer evening, and then each fleet withdrew to its

moorings. The sea was like oil, and that ominous calm reigned from which better sailors than the Greeks would have foretold storm. At midnight it thundered and lightened on Mount Pelion, the wind rose, and the wrecks and bodies were drifted to the station of the Persian fleet, and struck the crews with dismay. But it fared worse with their detached division, which was utterly destroyed on the rocks on the outer coast of Eubœa. Thus did the good wind Boreas still seem to help his friends. A reinforcement of fifty-three fresh Athenian galleys came up at daybreak, having escaped the storm inside the island. The ancient war-ships, even the great "five-bankers" of the Romans and Carthaginians, could stand no more weather than a river-steamer; while their great rounded Dutch-built merchant-ships would ride out a moderate gale fairly. On the afternoon of the second day the Greeks attacked again, and sank some Cilician vessels. On the third day about noon the Persians began the attack, while the Greeks kept their station at Artemisium. There was much fouling among the Persians from their closely-packed vessels, but they fought well, and neither side could claim much advantage. The Athenians gained most distinction among the allies; and of the Athenians Cleinias, son of Alcibiades, and father of him of that name who afterwards was the representative Athenian of the new school. He had manned and equipped his trireme at his own expense. The Greeks remained masters of the field—that is, of the scene of action, with the bodies and wrecks; but as half the Athenian fleet had been more or less damaged, they decided on withdrawing southward, especially as they now heard of the loss of Thermopylæ. Before he went, Themistocles

had inscriptions graven on the rocks by all the watering-places, exhorting the Ionian Greeks now in the service of Persia to desert. If this had no effect on those to whom they were addressed, it would at any rate make them objects of suspicion to the Persians. Then the Greeks sailed away—the Corinthians first, the Athenians, as became them, last.

While the Persian sailors and marines were wasting the north of Eubœa, a herald came from Xerxes ordering a day's leave ashore to be given, that the crews might view the field of Thermopylæ. On the Greek side were four thousand bodies in a heap, which the king pretended were all Spartans or Thespians; on his side lay about a thousand, scattered all over the field. The rest of the Persians had been carefully buried beforehand; but the trick deceived nobody.

The Persian army now advanced and ravaged Phocis, and on the farther frontier parted into two divisions, the larger entering the friendly territory of Boeotia, and making for Athens—the smaller proceeding towards Delphi. Xerxes was well instructed as to the wealth of Apollo's temple, and must have known by heart all the costly offerings that Croesus had made. The Delphians in dismay consulted their oracle: the god replied that "he could protect his own." Just when the enemy reached the ascent to the temple, a thunderstorm burst forth, and great rocks came rolling down the steep of Parnassus. The Persians fled, and the Delphians, assisted apparently by two supernatural warriors, emerged from their hiding-places and slew the hindermost. The priests of Apollo were doubtless adepts in the machinery of the stage.

CHAPTER XL

SALAMIS.

"The man of firm and righteous will,
No rabble, clamorous for the wrong,
No tyrant's brow, whose frown may kill,
Can shake the strength that makes him strong:
Not winds, that chafe the sea they sway,
Nor Jove's right hand, with lightning red:
Should Nature's pillared frame give way,
That wreck would strike one fearless head."

—CONINGTON'S 'Horace.'

SUCH is the portrait of Themistocles, as drawn by Kaulbach of Munich, in his great cartoon of the battle of Salamis. He stands at ease on the deck of his galley, sacrificing to the gods while the battle is ending. We feel that he would be as composed and dignified, only somewhat sadder, if the ruin were coming on him instead of on the enemy. The very self-seeking of this remarkable man in the midst of the most exciting circumstances bears testimony to the admirable balance of his nature. He somewhat resembles Marlborough, of whom, for all his romantic courage, Macaulay too severely says, that in his youth he loved lucre more than wine or women, and in his middle age he loved lucre more than power or glory. But it

must be remembered that Themistocles was a Greek, and the versatile Ulysses is the very type of a Greek hero. It was not in the Greek character to vie with Darius in his right royal disdain of petty advantage and private revenge. The Greeks would have made far better "hucksters" than that king, who was so called by his nobles because he was a good financier. And Themistocles was a first-rate example of the middle-class burgher, as "the curled Alcibiades" was of the "gilded youth" of a cultivated Greek republic. He was Presence-of-mind incarnate. But he was honest withal—with the honesty of a good Jew with whom one might safely deposit millions, but who would not fail to make every shilling breed. And he was a patriot—one who would die for his country at any moment, but was far too sensible to believe in her or to trust her. The sequel of his life showed that he was right. Themistocles, though not the highest type of man, is perhaps the most perfect specimen of the Greek on record.

The Athenians had hoped that the combined Greek forces would make a stand in Boeotia, but in this they were disappointed. The primary object of the Spartans was to take care of themselves; their secondary object to save Greece, that they might rule it. They wished the Athenians out of their way, but they felt that if the fire spread to them, it would be coming somewhat close to their own home. Could they not sacrifice Athens, and save the Athenians, who would then be their obedient servants? So they withdrew their land-forces behind the Isthmus of Corinth, which they proceeded to fortify; while the combined fleet was in-

duced, by the entreaties of the Athenians, to anchor off the island of Salamis, to which most of the latter proceeded to transfer for safety their families and goods.

The Greeks had received reinforcements which made their fleet larger now than when it had fought at Artemisium. The Athenians now furnished one hundred and eighty of the three hundred and seventy-eight galleys. The Persian army entered Athens only to find an empty city—none had remained in it but some of the very poorest, or a few obstinate heads who saw in the palisade of the citadel the “wooden walls” of the oracle, and strengthened it with planks accordingly. The Persians encamped on the Areopagus (the Mars’ Hill of St Paul), and shot lighted arrows at the barricade, which was soon in flames. But their storming-parties were foiled by a gallant defence, until a few soldiers scaled a place where no watch was kept, and were followed by others, who put the weak garrison to the sword. The temple of the goddess was plundered and burnt, and Xerxes sent a messenger home to Susa to announce that his vengeance was complete.

The sacrifice of Athens was unavoidable, yet it greatly affected the allies, who thought of withdrawing their fleet to the isthmus. But the Athenians felt that this step would almost certainly lead to its breaking up. There was a long war of words between Themistocles, Eurybiades, and Adeimantus. This last was insolent to the Athenian. “You have no country now,” said he, “and therefore no vote.” Themistocles replied, that with two hundred well-manned ships the Athenians would find a country wherever they chose to land. At last the threat that the Athenians would all emigrate to Italy, and give up

the war, prevailed. And preparations were made for battle.

The time was naturally one which abounded with portents and prodigies, which were generally interpreted to the disadvantage of the enemy. It was the time of the year of the great procession in honour of Ceres and Bacchus from Eleusis to Athens. It could not be held now, in the presence of the enemy, but a chant was heard in the air, as from no mortal choir, and a column of dust was seen to rise, and spread into a heavy cloud which overshadowed the Persian armament. Some enthusiasts averred that they saw the heroes Ajax, Teucer, and Achilles, battling for their homesteads in Salamis and Ægina. Their images, at all events, were brought out to battle, for good-luck. The Spanish Carlists, when they appointed the image of *Nostra Señora de los Dolores* generalissimo of their forces, went a step further; and this was in our remembrance.

The Persian fleet had already lost six hundred and fifty ships, but Herodotus says that it had been reinforced to the original number by the contingents from the islands and some maritime states—an assertion which seems hardly probable. At Phalerum, the harbour of Athens, a council of war was held. The best head in the fleet of Xerxes was a woman's—Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus. This Amazon of the sea seemed almost a match for that goddess of War and Wisdom whom the Athenians worshipped. She always appears a special favourite with her townsman Herodotus, who nevertheless is said to have found the tyranny of her family unendurable. She advised Xerxes to bide his time, and let the Greek confederacy fall to pieces from internal dissensions. But the

party of action prevailed ; the land-forces marched on the isthmus, where Cleombrotus, brother of Leonidas, now commanded, and the fleet weighed anchor.

The Spartans and other Greeks within the Peninsula had meanwhile been working night and day, throwing up a wall of defence across the isthmus. Their panic communicated itself to the fleet, so that Themistocles was obliged at last to resort to a desperate stratagem. He sent to the Persian commanders secretly, to tell them that he was a well-wisher of the king's, and that the Greeks meditated flight. The Persians believed it, and made such arrangements of their forces, under cover of the night, as would effectually prevent the escape of their enemies. The Greek council of captains was still in fierce debate when the Athenian Aristides arrived from Ægina, where he was undergoing ostracism (he was said to have been banished because the people were tired of hearing him called "the Just"), and said that he had just succeeded in getting through the enemy, who had completely surrounded the Greeks. All now made up their minds for the inevitable fight, and the commanders addressed the crews—Themistocles, with the most powerful eloquence. But the enemy attacked so fiercely that the Greeks backed water, till Ameinias the Athenian, whose blood was hotter than that of the rest, darted forward and engaged an enemy's ship. The two became entangled, and others coming up to their aid, the conflict became general. The Persians themselves fought better than at Artemisium, although they became involved in the same inextricable confusion, while the Greeks never allowed their line to be broken. The very circumstance that the Persians were under the eye of their king, who over-

looked the battle from a neighbouring promontory, told in one respect against them, since it caused those in the rear to press to the front, and thus get involved with their own retreating ships; so that a tangled ball of hulls, oars, and rigging, was formed, which the freely-moving Greeks could strike at and tear to pieces at their leisure.

The vanquished showed in some instances great gallantry. The liege lady of Herodotus, Queen Artemisia, distinguished herself as much in the fight as in the council, but in a way of questionable morality. Being hard pressed by an Athenian galley, she turned on one belonging to her own allies, and sank it. The Athenian thought he must have made a mistake, and sheered off, while the unsuspecting Xerxes admired the good service his fair ally seemed to be doing. "My men," said he, "fight like women, and my women like men." Such cool effrontery would have been unintelligible to a Persian. There was a petty king on board the galley which she had sunk; but drowned men tell no tales.

A brother of the king, Ariabignes, the admiral, perished, and a vast number of noble Persians. The Greeks whose ships were sunk mostly saved themselves by swimming, while the Persians lost more drowned than killed in action. The fugitives tried to reach Phalerum, but there were Æginetans outside, who swooped on them like falcons. The stage-coward of the battles of Artemisium and Salamis is the unfortunate Adeimantus, who is accused of attempted flight. Why was Herodotus, usually so impartial, so spiteful against him and the Corinthians? He may have relied on Athenian information, or perhaps some general impression of Greek half-heartedness must have come from Halicarnassian or Ionian sources. Æschylus,

in his magnificent tragedy of "The Persians," beside which the prose of Herodotus is tame, speaks of nothing but patriotic zeal, singing of pæans, and joyous alacrity. The hero of Waterloo is said to have modestly observed to some ladies who complimented him on a description of the battle, "I ought to know all about it, for I was there myself." So Æschylus ought to be our best authority for the battle of Salamis, as he was present himself, probably in the ship of his brother Ameinias. According to him, it was the Persians who were caught in a trap by Themistocles : thinking the Greeks were in retreat, they had made their arrangements for chase and not for action, which rendered their discomfiture more easy ; since not only did those who came up break their fighting order, but, as at Artemisium, they had detached a considerable squadron to block the entrance to the strait. The poet describes the chase as lasting till midnight, in the open sea, the Greeks destroying the helpless enemy "like fishermen harpooning in a shoal of tunny-fish." All the shore of Attica was strewn with wrecks.

"Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Behind Morea's hills the setting sun ;
Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light !
O'er the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Hydra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile ;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast, the mountain-shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquered Salamis !"*

* Byron—"The Corsair."

But never did the sun of Greece set on a scene so memorable, and so beautiful in one sense, in the midst of its terror, as on that autumn evening in the year 480 B.C. There was yet more to be done, but Greece and civilisation were safe.

The destruction of the grand fleet necessitated the retreat of the heterogeneous multitude which called itself the grand army, for it depended on the fleet for most of its supplies. But it was hoped that a picked force might still succeed, and Xerxes left behind 300,000 troops under the command of Mardonius, who went into winter quarters in Thessaly, when he started homewards with all possible speed. This flight may have had State reasons for it, like that of Napoleon from Russia, for the outlying provinces were always ready for insurrection; but, considering his character, the simple interpretation of his conduct appears the most probable, that he was thoroughly cowed. Themistocles wished to follow up the victory by hunting the fugitives from island to island, and then destroying the bridge of boats over the Hellespont. When he was overruled by Eurybiades, he gave out that he had changed his mind, and sent a faithful slave to find Xerxes, and tell him that, out of personal goodwill to his majesty, Themistocles had prevented the Greeks from destroying the bridge.

An unusually early winter, as in the Russian campaign of 1812, added to the sufferings of the retreat. According to the tragedian *Æschylus*, great numbers perished in attempting to cross the frozen Strymon, thus forestalling the Beresina disaster. The Hellespont bridge had been broken up, not by the Greeks but by a storm; but there was no difficulty in

ferrying across the miserable remnant in boats. At Abydos they came on supplies, and many who had survived starvation on grass and tree-bark died of surfeit. One version of the account makes Xerxes leave his army on the Strymon, and take ship himself for Asia. A storm coming on, the ship was in such danger that the pilot declared that there was no chance of safety unless some of those on board would sacrifice themselves to lighten it, and appealed to the loyalty of the Persians, who accordingly leapt overboard. It is added that, on coming safely to land, the king presented the pilot with a golden crown for saving his own life, and then had him beheaded for causing the death of so many of his gallant servants. The latter part looks like the repetition of an anecdote of Cambyses; and indeed Herodotus scarcely believes the story, as he observes that the Persians might have been sent below, and the Phœnician crew sacrificed. It did not seem to strike him that sailors are of more use in a storm than the best soldiers, and the self-devoting loyalty of the Persians to their monarch's person is well known.

The Greeks passed an anxious winter, for Mardonius remained in Thessaly, making his preparations for action in the spring. Their allied fleet, a hundred and ten strong, was persuaded to come as far as Delos by an embassy from Asia (one of whom was an Herodotus, possibly a relative of our author), who represented that the Greek colonies there were ripe for revolt. They were, however, deterred for the present from proceeding farther; possibly because a Lacedæmonian, naturally a landsman, was first in command. *Mardonius* in the mean time spent the winter in con-

sulting oracles, the answers of which do not seem to have been particularly encouraging, as he afterwards resorted to the more statesmanlike measure of endeavouring to detach the Athenians from the Greek alliance. For this mission he selected Alexander, the son of Amyntas, prince of Macedon. The Spartans, hearing of it, sent ambassadors on their part to beseech them not to desert the cause of Greece. The Athenians, with something of a lofty contempt, bade them have no fear, and told Alexander that they would carry on the war with the destroyers of their city and temples "so long as the sun held its course in heaven"—and warned him, as he valued his safety, never again to bring them a like proposal. They were terribly in earnest; for when one Lycidas, a fellow-townsmen, counselled submission on another occasion, they stoned him to death.

CHAPTER XII.

PLATEÆ AND MYCALE.

" A day of onsets of despair !
Dashed on every rocky square,
Their surging charges foamed themselves away.
Last the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Through the long-tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept, and charged, and overthrew."
—TENNYSON : " Ode on the Death
of the Duke of Wellington."

THE concluding act of the great historical drama opens with the spring of B.C. 479. Mardonius has come south from Thessaly, and is gleaning in Athens whatever the spoiler, Xerxes, had left. The Athenians are again in their island-asylum of Salamis. The Spartans are marching on the Isthmus of Corinth, under the command of Pausanias, who had succeeded his father Cleombrotus in the regency and the guardianship of the young son of Leonidas, who did not live to reign. After a demonstration towards Megara, where he hoped to cut off the advanced-guard of the allies, Mardonius proceeded into the Theban territory, where he constructed a vast fortified camp on the bank of the river Asopus. A general ad-

vance was now made by the Peloponnesians from the isthmus to Eleusis, where they were joined by the Athenian contingent from Salamis. When they had ascertained where the Persians were, they set themselves in array along the highlands of Cithæron. As they seemed indisposed to come down into the plain, Mardonius sent his cavalry to feel their position, under the command of Masistius.

This Murat of the Persian army was a handsome giant, who rode a white Nisæan charger, whose accoutrements, as well as those of his rider, glittered with gold. So rode Charles of Burgundy at Granson or at Morat. In the present day such costume is scarcely to be seen further west than India, and some tall Rajah, full dressed for the Governor-General's durbar, would give a good idea of how Masistius looked at the head of his cuirassiers. These galloped up to the Greek infantry in troops, hurling their javelins, and calling them "women" because they did not come on. The Megarians were in the most exposed place. Being hard pressed, they sent to Pausanias for succour. When he called for volunteers, the Athenians promptly offered, and three hundred picked men, supported by archers, moved up. The charges continued without cessation, Masistius leading with the utmost gallantry, and presenting a conspicuous mark to the bowmen. At last an arrow pierced the side of his charger. He reared back from the agony of the wound, and threw his rider, who now lay at the mercy of his enemies, stunned by his fall, and, like the knights of the middle ages, helpless from the weight of his panoply. His vest of Tyrian crimson was pierced with spear-points, but

still he lived, for under it he wore a shirt of golden mail. At last a hand more dexterous than the rest pierced his brain through one of the eye-holes of his visor, for he was too proud to ask for quarter. Amongst his own followers, as they charged and wheeled about, no one knew that he was dead, and they might even have ridden over the body of their unconscious commander, as the Prussian cavalry did over Blucher when he lay under his dead horse at Ligny. But when they retired he was immediately missed, for there was no one to give the word of command. All that they could now do for him was to recover his body, and with this object the squadrons united and made a combined onset. To meet this, the Athenians called up other Greek troops to their assistance. While they were coming, a fierce struggle took place for the body, which the Athenians were obliged to leave till their reinforcements joined them. But as it could not be easily removed by cavalry, it ultimately remained in possession of the Greeks. Many Persian knights shared the fate of their commander, so that the rest of the troopers were obliged to ride back to Mardonius with the news of their misfortune. The death of Masistius was considered such a blow that it was bewailed by the whole army, corps after corps taking up the dole of their Adonis, till it resounded through all Bœotia, and horses and men were ordered to be shorn and shaven as a sign of public mourning; for Masistius, next to Mardonius, was considered the greatest man in the army. To the Greeks his fall was a matter of equal rejoicing, and the handsome corpse was carried along the lines to raise the spirits of the soldiers. Their fear of cavalry was now wearing off, and a general forward movement

was made towards the plain of Platæa, where water was more abundant. They took up a new position near the Gargaphian Fountain (the modern Vergantiani). Here a hot debate arose between the Tegeans and Athenians, each demanding the honour of occupying the left wing (the Spartans always claimed the right), which was decided, chiefly on mythological grounds, in favour of the Athenians. The army was thus marshalled: on the right were five thousand heavy-armed Spartans, with thirty-five thousand light-armed Helots, and of other Laconians five thousand; then the Tegeans, then the other Greek contingents, till on the extreme left six hundred Platæans stood by the side of eight thousand Athenians under Aristides. The decision of Greek battles mainly rested on the heavy-armed infantry. Each man of these was generally attended by his military servant, and looked upon himself as an officer and a gentleman. The Athenian contingent probably represented all who were not engaged on board the fleet. The remnant of the Thespians—whose city as well as Platæa had been sacked—eighteen hundred in number, were also there, but now too much impoverished to serve as heavy-armed. The sum total of the army was one hundred and ten thousand men, being less than one to three to the army of the king.

Mardonius honoured the Spartans by confronting them with his best troops, the Persians; he posted his Medes, Bactrians, Indians, and Sacæ opposite the other Greeks, and threatened the Athenians with his Greek and Macedonian allies. Besides his three hundred thousand, he had a number of small contingents, such as marines from the fleet, and perhaps fifty thousand Greek auxiliaries. It was not the custom for

any army to engage until the omens had been pronounced favourable ; and the soothsayers on both sides constantly reported that they were favourable for defence, but not for attack. After the two armies had thus watched each other for eight days, Mardonius was advised to occupy the passes of Cithæron, as the Greeks were constantly being reinforced from that quarter, and accordingly despatched cavalry to a pass leading to Plataea, called "Three Heads" by the Bœotians, and "Oakheads" by the Athenians (the Greek words sounding much the same). This foray resulted in destroying a military train of five hundred sumpter animals, which was making its way to the Greek army. The two next days were passed in demonstrations of cavalry up to the Asopus, which ran between the armies, the Theban horse showing great alacrity in annoying their Hellenic brethren, but leaving the serious fighting to the Persians. On the eleventh day Mardonius, tired of inaction, held a council of war, the result of which was that he ordered an attack on the next day, in spite of the still unfavourable auspices.

In the dead of night, as the armies lay in position, the Athenian sentries were accosted by a solitary horseman who asked to speak to their commanders. When they came to the front, he told them that the omens had till now restrained Mardonius, but that yesterday he had "bid the omens farewell," and intended to fight on the morrow. He added, that he hoped that his present service would not be forgotten ; he was of Greek origin, and a secret friend of the Greeks : his name was Alexander, the son of Amyntas of Macedonia. As soon as the message had been reported to Pausanias, he, with a scarcely Spartan spirit,

wished the Athenians to change places with him, as, from their experience at Marathon, they knew the Persian manner of fighting better. And this manœuvre, dangerous as it was to attempt in the face of the enemy, would have been executed, had not Mardonius discovered it, and made a corresponding disposition of his own army. He then sent a herald to reproach the Spartans, and challenge them to fight man for man, with or without the rest of the combatants, as they pleased. As no answer was given, his cavalry were launched *en masse* against the Greek army. The mounted archers caused them great annoyance, and destroyed the Gargaphian well, from which their water supply was drawn. The supplies from the rear having been cut off, the Greeks determined on a westward movement towards the city of Platæa, where they would be within reach of water. Half the army were to carry out this movement in the night, while the other half were to fall back on Cithæron, to protect their line of communication with their base behind the isthmus. The first division had suffered so much during the day, that in their joy at the respite they retired too far, and never halted till they reached the precincts of a temple of Juno, close to Platæa itself. Pausanias himself was following, but he was kept back by the insubordination of a sturdy colonel named Amompharetus, who objected to any strategic movements which looked like running away. At length he was left to follow or not, as he pleased, while the rest of the Spartans defiled along the safe and hilly ground, the Athenians striking across the exposed plain. Mardonius had now some reason to despise his enemy, and he ordered all his cavalry to

charge, and the infantry to advance at quick march, crossing the Asopus. The Athenians were hidden from him by a series of knolls, but he pressed hard on the steps of the Lacedæmonians and Tegeans. Fortune sometimes favours the timid as well as the brave. Seeing Mardonius apparently pursuing the enemy, the rest of his army at once broke their ranks and followed in disorder, each man eager to be in at the death of the quarry which his commander was hunting down. Pausanias had already sent a mounted orderly to the Athenians to beg that they would come to his assistance, or at least send their archers, as he was sorely vexed by the cavalry. They could not comply, as they wanted all their strength to repulse a general attack which was just then being made on them by the king's Greeks. Pausanias halted his line; but still the sacrifices were unpropitious. From behind the Persian breastwork of shields came a rain of arrows, and the breastwork itself seemed impregnable. The Lacedæmonians and Tegeans were falling fast. At last Pausanias espied at no great distance the temple of Juno, and offered up a prayer to the goddess. The omens at once changed, as by magic. The Tegeans dashed at the enemy's fence of shields. The Spartans followed, and the battle was won. The Persians fought like bull-dogs, singly or in knots, though their long dress, says the chronicler, was terribly in the way. They wrenched away or snapt asunder the long Greek lances, and made play with their hangers. Mardonius, conspicuous on a white horse, like Ney at Waterloo, was the "bravest of the brave." But at last a cry rose that Mardonius was down, and at that cry the Persians wavered, and fled in wild

disorder to the great stockade which had been built to protect their camp. But Artabazus, who had now come up, had kept his forty thousand men in hand when he saw the scramble of the attack; and when he saw the repulse, he made no attempt to save the day, but faced about and at once began an orderly retreat on the Hellespont. Some of the Greeks who had joined the Persian king fought desperately in their miserable cause. Three hundred noble Thebans are said to have fallen in the front of the battle. This may have been the "Sacred Band" which fought under Epaminondas in later history, and which consisted of friends sworn to live and die together. These Thebans fought indeed "with halters round their necks:" for after the victory, Pausanias insisted on the surrender of the chiefs of the late movement, and executed them all. When the Greeks who had made the mistake of retreating too far turned back in disorder to get their share of the glory, poetical justice overtook them in the shape of a charge of the Persian and Theban cavalry, which stung them with the energy of a doomed swarm of wasps. They lost six hundred men, and were scattered to the heights of Cithæron. All was not yet over. A new battle began at the Persian camp, which vigorously repelled the onslaughts of the Spartans and their allies. It was not till the Athenians came up (who understood "wall-fighting," says Herodotus) that the day could be spoken of as finally decided. They managed to break or upset the "abattis," and the Tegeans again led the forlorn hope through it or over it. Then began the slaughter. Only three thousand were left alive of the whole Persian army. This seems incredible,

especially in connection with the small number of the allies who fell in the action, as given by Herodotus. But the vanquished were possibly impounded in their fortified camp, like the wretched Mamelukes whom Mehemet Ali destroyed in the court of a fortress.

The plunder was immense. The tent of Mardonius, with all the royal plate which the king had left him, his manger of bronze, gold and silver in all shapes, splendidly inlaid arms, vestments, horses, camels, beautiful women, became the dangerous prize of the needy Peloponnesians, who, to avert Nemesis, offered a tithe of all to the gods. Pausanias buried with due honours the body of the brave Mardonius, though he was strongly urged by an Æginetan of high rank to remember how that of Leonidas had been treated by Xerxes. "Would you have me humble my country in the dust, now that I have just raised her?" was the Spartan's answer. And he bid the proposer be thankful that he answered him only in words.

It seems to have been the invidious custom in all Greek battles to assign to one or two men the prize of valour, and our author always gives their names. The bravest of all was adjudged to be the Spartan Aristodemus, sole survivor of the glorious three hundred of Thermopylæ. He could not bear his life, and now lost it purposely; therefore he was refused the usual honours. Sophanes was proclaimed the bravest of the Athenians: he was in fact so brave that (perhaps adopting an idea from his experience afloat) he wore an anchor and chain, by which he moored himself to his post in action.* It is

* So the wounded at the battle of Clontarf, in Ireland, are said to have got themselves tied to stakes.

a pity to lose our faith in so quaint an expedient ; but there was another version of the story, says our honest chronicler, that he bore an anchor as the device on his shield. The prudent Artabazus reached Byzantium safely, though he was roughly handled on the road by the Thracians and Macedonians, the latter of whom had been from the first favourable to the Greeks.

This "crowning mercy" of Plateæ, as Cromwell would have called it, was supplemented by a brilliant action which took place on the same day at Mycælè, on the coast of Ionia.

When the season for navigation had come, the Greek fleet under Leotychides, which had remained at Delos, pushed across to Samos, but the prey they had expected to find there had flown. The Persian fleet had placed itself under the protection of a land force of sixty thousand men under Tigranes, appointed by Xerxes governor of Ionia, and was drawn up on shore at Mycælè, protected by a rampart and palisade. The Greeks came provided with gangway boards, and all other appliances for naval action. But the Persians were morally sea-sick, therefore Leotychides disembarked his troops at his leisure. A mysterious rumour of a great victory in Boeotia, ascribed to some divine messenger, but possibly brought as a telegram by fire-signals, put the Greeks in heart. It was afternoon, and the field of Plateæ had been fought in the morning. The Athenians were already engaged, when the Lacedæmonians came up, having to make a circuit by a rugged way intersected with ravines. As at Plateæ, the Persians fought well as long as their rampart of bucklers stood upright : even when it gave way, they broke up into clusters, which fought like wild boars at bay.

The onset of the Athenians was the more furious that they feared to have their laurels snatched from them by their friends. They drove the Persians into their camp, and, more fortunate than their brethren at Plataea, entered it pell-mell with the flying enemy. The barbarian auxiliaries fled where they could, but the Persians themselves still held out desperately, until the Lacedæmonians came up and completed the defeat. Tigranes and Mardontes died as became Persian officers, fighting gallantly to the last. The Milesians in the Persian service, who had been posted to guard the passes of the mountain, turned on the fugitives and cut them up; for revolt became general among the Ionian Greeks as soon as the battle was over, and Samos, Chios, Lesbos, and other islands, joined the confederacy for reprisals against Persia.

The Greek fleet now sailed to the Hellespont, where they found the bridge of boats destroyed. Then Leotychides went home with his Spartans, but the Athenians stayed and besieged Sestos, which held out till the autumn, when it was taken by famine. There had been a serious debate whether it would not be better to remove the Ionian colonists altogether, and settle them in Greece, than leave them to the future tender mercies of Persia. But the question was settled by the Athenians taking their Asiatic colonies into close league and alliance.

In those two memorable years, which end the narrative of Herodotus, Europe had established its preponderance over Asia for ever. The last tableau of his great epic drama is almost lost in its blaze of glory, and it is time that the curtain should fall. It is true that Herodotus hardly recognises

this, and tries to amuse his readers for some time longer with the not very edifying court-scandal of Susa. Xerxes had infinite trouble with the ladies of his court. The fierce and jealous sultana Amestris, who treated her rival with such fiendish cruelty, may be the Vashti of the Book of Esther, as Ahasuerus is supposed to be the Scriptural form of her husband's name. Nemesis was fully satisfied when Xerxes himself fell a victim to a palace intrigue; but this is not mentioned by Herodotus, nor that a statue of that dread Power was placed on the spot where he had been a spectator of the destruction of his fleet. ✓

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

It has thus been attempted to give, in a succinct form, the general drift and character of the great work of Herodotus. In the original, his liquid and pellucid Ionian dialect constitutes one of the greatest charms of his style. In simple perspicuity he forms a remarkable contrast to the terse and gnarled Thucydides, who propounds so many puzzles to the classical scholar. But no ancient author is so profitable to read in a good translation. A good translation is like a good photograph, giving distinctive traits, and light and shade, but no life or colour. Our attempt is a coloured sketch on a small scale, and not a photograph, of a great book.

Herodotus may be considered, according to the standard of his time, as a decidedly veracious historian. And his veracity is of the kind that wears well. It is impossible to refuse to credit him with general impartiality; and if he erred at all, the modern reader will readily pardon his excessive sympathy with the Athenians. Yet he does full justice to the gallantry, generosity, and other high qualities of the Persians. He was born, we must remember, a Persian subject,—for Halicarnassus did not recover its independence until

he had grown up to manhood—and he could speak from experience of the masters of Ionia, that their rule was, on the whole, just and equal. His own town, indeed, had met with exceptional kindness from her liege lords. Hence he has none of the usual Greek contempt of and antipathy to “barbarians,” or people speaking an unknown tongue, which is a *primâ facie* reason for dislike with the vulgar of all nations. His great merit is that of Homer and Shakespeare, a broad catholicity of sentiment in observing and estimating character. He has the strongest sympathy with heroism whenever displayed, an exquisite feeling for humorous situations, and, as naturally connected with humour, intense pathos when the subject admits of it. He has the head of a sage, the heart of a mother, and the simple apprehension of a child. And if his style is redundant with a sort of Biblical reiteration, it is always clear and luminous. There can never be any mistake about his meaning, as long as no corruption has crept into his text, which, when it happens, is the fault of his transcribers, and not his own. His ethical portraits are above all invaluable, and, however fabulous the circumstances with which they are connected, must have been true to the life, from their evidently undesigned consistency. The benignant and vain Croesus, the ambitious Cyrus, the truculent Cambyses, the chivalrous yet calculating Darius, the wild Cleomenes, the wise and wary Themistocles, the frantic Xerxes—the very type of the infatuation by which the divine vengeance wrought—these, and a host of other portraits of living men, can only be compared in their verisimilitude with the immortal creations of Shakespeare.

Not a few pleasant anecdotes—mythical, ethical,

social, and historical—as well as nearly all the minor affluents of the main stream of narrative, have been passed over or barely glanced at, for want of space. Some indelicacies have been softened in stories too good to omit, but this process leaves their spirit unchanged. For our author is always antique and always natural. When he errs against refinement, it is in a sort of infantine naughtiness—not with the perverse intention of a modern writer. Indeed, his high moral principle cannot fail to strike even a careless reader. His blood plainly boils at injustice or cruelty; and whatever superstition he may have inherited with his religious creed, he has an intense faith in an overruling Providence, which, spite of some anomalies which puzzle him, as they have done the wisest in all ages, does on the whole ordain that “the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth—much more the wicked and the sinner.”

END OF HERODOTUS.

XENOPHON

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X E N O P H O N.

CHAPTER I.

NOTICES OF THE LIFE OF XENOPHON PREVIOUS TO THE EXPEDITION OF CYRUS.

THERE is none of the ancient Greek authors whose personality stands more clearly before us than that of Xenophon. We owe this entirely to his own writings, for external notices of him are meagre and untrustworthy. But the historian of the expedition of Cyrus, the recorder of the conversations of Socrates, and the varied essayist on so many topics of ancient Greek life, was one of those writers who, in depicting other things, give at the same time a portrait of themselves. His chief work is the account of a military expedition in which he was himself engaged, and in which he ultimately played a very prominent and leading part. So it follows only naturally that five-sevenths of this work are almost pure autobiography. We have thus from Xenophon's own hand a minute and living pic-

ture of himself and his actions for more than a year and a half, during one of the most interesting episodes of military history. We have from himself also an indication of his subsequent mode of life in his country residence, when he had settled down into a landed proprietor, and had exchanged the sword for the pen. And all his writings, though perfectly artistic, are so naïve, communicative, and at the same time so consistent in tone, that we can have no doubt that they reflect his real character. They seem to bring the man himself, with his habits and ways of thinking, his principles, prejudices, and superstitions, vividly before us. But except what can be derived from these sources, we have scarcely any information about the life of Xenophon. There is a biography of him written by Diogenes Laertius at the end of the second century A.D. But, like the rest of the "Lives" of Diogenes, it is a mere *debris* of anecdotes and traditions; and no assertion which it contains can be accepted without criticism.

There is no reason, however, for discrediting the statement that Xenophon was the son of one Gryllus, an Athenian citizen; for this is corroborated by the better-attested fact that the historian had a son also named Gryllus—it being the custom at Athens to call children after their grandfathers. The family of Xenophon must have belonged to the upper middle ranks of Athens, as he himself was one of the class of "knights," or horsemen, for whom a property-qualification was required. But he could not have had much hereditary riches to depend on, else he would

not have made himself a soldier of fortune, fighting "for his own hand" in Asia, and being anxious to settle down there as a colonist, had circumstances been favourable.

As to the exact date of the birth of Xenophon, there has been some doubt and controversy. This, however, has arisen from the words occurring at the commencement of one of his minor works, called 'The Banquet,' in which he professes to describe circumstances at which he was himself present. The supper-party in question was connected with the Panathenaic games of the year 420 B.C.; and some critics, assuming that Xenophon must have been more than twenty years old at the time, place the date of his birth at about 445 B.C. This assumption is connected with a story, of apocryphal origin, that Xenophon was present at the battle of Delium (424 B.C.), and that his life was saved by Socrates on that occasion. Other circumstances, however, prevent us from believing in the reality of such an occurrence. And as to the 'Banquet,' internal evidence tends to show that this is a merely imaginative picture, so that we cannot build any theory on Xenophon's having stated that he was "present" on the occasion, and still less can we find any ground in his description of the circumstances for deciding how old he may have been at the time. The real *data* that we have for fixing the age of Xenophon consist in the terms in which he speaks of himself in relating the "Retreat of the Ten Thousand." And these are sufficiently conclusive for all practical purposes. He twice speaks of the immaturity

of his own age, at that period, as rendering him difficult in offering counsel to the other captains of the Greek army. He mentions himself as youngest of the seven officers chosen to conduct the retreat ; he relates his own constant performance of duties requiring youthful activity ; and he records that the Thracian chief, Seuthes, thinking that he was possibly unmarried, offered him the hand of his daughter. From all this we may fairly gather that Xenophon, at the time of the expedition of Cyrus (401 B.C.), was not more than thirty years of age. His birth may, with great probability, be placed about the year 431 B.C., contemporaneously with the commencement of the Peloponnesian war.

Through the successive phases of that twenty-eight years' war, Xenophon grew up to manhood. He was probably unconscious of the horrors of the plague which raged at Athens during the second and third years of the war. But he may well have remembered in his early boyhood the annual invasion of Attica by the Spartans, and the ravaging of the country up to the very city walls. When about seventeen years old he probably shared in the enthusiasm connected with the sending off of the Athenian expedition against Sicily ; and two years later he witnessed the national grief and consternation at the news of the utter destruction of the Athenian force at Syracuse. When about twenty-eight years old, he saw the blockade, and finally the capitulation, of Athens, which in some respects might be compared to the capitulation of Paris in the year 1871. Such comparisons must not

be pushed too far ; but in some particulars the relation of the Spartans to the Athenian people might be said to be analogous to that of the Germans to the French in the great Franco-Prussian war. The events contemporaneous with his youth and early manhood must necessarily have had an influence on the mind and character of Xenophon. It was altogether an unhappy time—a period in which the national *prestige* of Athens was gradually being lost. The effect on the mind of a youthful Athenian would naturally be to prevent his feeling a pride in his country. This is, doubtless, an unfavourable circumstance for any one. In after-life we find Xenophon not absolutely unpatriotic—indeed, in his writings he appears constantly to be devising methods for the improvement of the Athenian resources ; but we find him deficient in anything like reverence for Athens. He seems to “sit loose” on his country, and he shows a readiness to denationalise himself, and throw in his fortunes with those of foreign states, which can be best explained by reference to the events and influences of his youth.

In the mean time, Xenophon had shared with his countrymen that awakening of the intellect which especially characterised Athens during the very period of her incipient political decline. It was the time when Athenian poetry and art had reached their acme, and now oratory and debate were being studied and practised with zeal ; Greek prose style was being cultivated and developed ; and, from the discussions of the Sophists and Socrates, philosophy was receiving a new

birth. The keen lively mind of Xenophon drank in all the influences of the age. He probably never listened to the eloquence of the great Pericles, but he must have heard innumerable debates in the Agora, and probably took part in many. From year to year he enjoyed the refining influence of the great masterpieces of Greek tragedy brought upon the stage by Sophocles, Euripides, and Agathon; while, at the same time, the inimitable comedies of Aristophanes furnished annually a humorous and intellectual commentary on public events and characters. Xenophon's thoughts must necessarily have been much engaged with war and foreign politics; and, above all, he had the great advantage, during the plastic period of his youth, of being the pupil and companion of the renowned Athenian teacher, Socrates.

We cannot tell whether the tradition, which has been preserved by Diogenes, of the beginning of this relationship, can be regarded as literally true. But at all events it is a very pleasing anecdote. We are told that Socrates, encountering Xenophon, who was "a beautiful, modest boy," in a narrow passage, put his stick across so as to stop him, and asked him "where provisions could be bought?" On Xenophon mentioning some place, he again asked, "And where are men made noble and good?" As Xenophon knew not what to answer, he said, "Well, then, follow and learn." And thenceforth Xenophon became the disciple of Socrates.

He appears to have diligently applied himself to profit by his opportunities, for he was considered by


the ancients to have been "the first man that ever took notes of conversations." He made a considerable collection of the conversations of Socrates thus noted down. These were afterwards published in the book commonly known as the '*Memorabilia*,' for which all the intellectual world must be grateful to Xenophon. But personally he can only have been to a limited extent influenced by the teachings of Socrates, as he had no taste for the higher and more abstract parts of philosophy, and therefore he only assimilated the ethical and practical elements of the thought of his master. Other pupils of Socrates, such as Plato and Euclid, appear to have derived from their teacher an impulse towards metaphysical speculation, of which Xenophon shows no trace. He was throughout his life a practical sensible man of the world, imbued with the easier and more popular Socratic theories; rather too fond of omens and divination, for which taste he quoted the authority of his master; doubtless much cultivated and improved by all the Socratic discussions to which he had listened, but by no means to be reckoned as one of the philosophers of the Socratic "family."

He appears, at all events, to have regarded Socrates as his mentor and adviser in the affairs of life. We have from his own pen * the following account of the share of Socrates in determining the step most important of all in the career of Xenophon. In the year 402 B.C. he received a letter from a Boeotian friend named Proxenus, urging him to come to Sardis and take

* *Anabasis*, iii. 1.

service under Cyrus, the younger brother of Artaxerxes king of Persia. He showed this letter to Socrates, and consulted him whether he should go. Socrates thought that there was a risk of Xenophon's getting into trouble with his countrymen if he were to join Cyrus, who was believed to have given assistance against them to the Spartans. He advised him to go to Delphi and consult the oracle. Xenophon went accordingly to Delphi; but having made up his own mind on the subject, he barred dissuasion by evasively asking of Apollo "what god he should sacrifice to in order to perform most propitiously the journey which he had in his mind?" The oracle directed him to sacrifice to "Jupiter the King." Having taken back this answer, he was reproved by Socrates, but told that he must now do as the god had directed. Accordingly he performed his sacrifice, and crossed the Archipelago to Ephesus, whence he proceeded to the rendezvous at Sardis.

In this story we see amusingly exhibited the wilfulness of the youthful Xenophon, and the practical shrewdness, mixed with superstition, of Socrates. There might be some risk of unpleasant consequences from taking service under Cyrus, yet, on the other hand, there was a chance of such a step turning out well. The offers of Cyrus had a peculiar fascination for the soldiers of fortune in Greece; and Socrates, even as a practical adviser, may have been not insensible to the same imaginative influence. He followed his own maxim, "In cases of doubt consult the gods," and despatched Xenophon to the oracle of Delphi.



The oracular response, as commonly happened in such circumstances, only confirmed the inquirer in the course to which he was himself inclined. And Xenophon accordingly joined the expedition of Cyrus. He joined it "neither as an officer nor a soldier," but in an unattached capacity. The leading events of that ill-fated expedition, and the subsequent adventures of the Greek force which was engaged in it, will occupy the three following chapters; and with all these events Xenophon himself was so completely identified, that the account of them, taken from his '*Anabasis*,' will be found to be a continuation of the life of the historian.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXPEDITION OF CYRUS.

THE best and most interesting of the works of Xenophon is called the 'Anabasis.' This name signifies the "march up-country," that is, from the sea to Babylon, and is only applicable to the first part of the work. The book, therefore, is misnamed, as it is far more concerned with the 'Catabasis,' or "march down to the sea again." Letting this pass, the 'Anabasis' essentially consists of three parts; 1st, The Expedition of Cyrus, and his invasion of the Persian dominions; 2d, The retreat of the Greek contingent in his army to the Euxine; 3d, The vicissitudes of that contingent when they had got back among Greek towns, but still kept together as a mercenary force. These three divisions of the story give us the natural headings for the present and two subsequent chapters.

The Cyrus now referred to is of course not Cyrus the Great (mentioned in the Bible), who had died more than a century previous to this expedition, and who had been succeeded by Cambyeses, Darius I., Xerxes I. (Ahasuerus), Artaxerxes I., and Darius II. (called

Nothus), who was father to Artaxerxes II. (called Mnemon), and to Cyrus, the younger, with whom we have to do.

Darius Nothus came to the throne in the year 423 B.C., and Cyrus was born after this date. He was, therefore, less than twenty-one years old when our story begins. Orientals are precocious, and early authority matures the powers; but still it must be allowed that he was a young prince of very extraordinary abilities, for in the measures by which he proposed to carry out his ambitious projects, he quite departed from the traditional ideas of his country. He was the favourite son of his mother, Parysatis, who encouraged him in expecting to supersede his elder brother and succeed to the throne. As he had been born *after* his father's accession, he had, according to Persian custom, a superior claim to his brother, who, having been born *before* the accession, ranked as the son of a private person. But Darius Nothus, his father, settled it otherwise, and gave Cyrus, in his seventeenth year, the satrapy of Lydia, Phrygia, and Cappadocia, being, in short, the greater part of Asia Minor, while he nominated Artaxerxes to succeed himself on the throne.

The youthful satrap had, from the first, Greek troops in his pay, and Greek officers about his person. He mixed in Grecian politics, and assisted the Spartans in their war against Athens. Just before his father's death (404 B.C.) he was summoned to Babylon, and, when the decease had occurred, he was charged with plotting against his newly-crowned brother. He was arrested by Artaxerxes, and would have been put to

death, but his mother begged his life and sent him back to his province.

Returning in disgrace and anger, he organised with secrecy and determination his plans. He collected more Greek troops by giving out that Tissaphernes, a neighbouring satrap, had designs upon the Greek towns in Asia Minor, and inviting Spartan soldiers to come over for their defence. He employed Clearchus, a Lacedæmonian exile, Proxenus, the friend of Xenophon, and other Greek adventurers who had come to his court, to raise a force for him, on the pretext of an expedition against Tissaphernes, or against the mountaineers of Pisidia. Sardis was the rendezvous, Pisidia the ostensible object; all designs against Artaxerxes were carefully concealed. And, in the meanwhile, the Great King himself was entirely blinded with regard to his brother's intentions. He thought that one satrap was going to make war on another—a circumstance entirely beneath his notice!

With a Greek force approaching 10,000 (they became afterwards rather more by additions on the way), and with a native army of 100,000 men, Cyrus marched from Sardis in the early spring of the year 401 B.C. He proceeded in a south-easterly direction, as it was part of his plan that his fleet should co-operate with him on the south coast of Asia Minor, and the route taken was that which would have led to Pisidia. They marched about seventy miles to the Mæander, which they crossed on a bridge of boats, and stopped a week at the wealthy city of Colossæ,* where reinforcements

* This was the place to which St Paul's "Epistle to the

joined them. Proceeding onwards, they reached Celænæ, where Cyrus had a palace and a vast park (Xenophon calls it by the Persian name, a "paradise") stocked with wild animals, which he used to hunt when he or his horses required exercise. In this "government house," which he was destined never to see again, he now rested for a month, and the army was increased by the arrival of more Greek recruits. The Greek contingent was reviewed, and was found to consist of 11,200 men.

In the plains of Caystrus three months' pay became due to the troops. There had been some mistake in the arrangements, and Cyrus was in perplexity, when, most opportunely, he was joined by Epiaxa, wife of Syennesis, king of Cilicia, who came to meet him, bringing a large sum of money as an offering, and with this he paid his men. With the Cilician queen in his company he marched on to the city of Tyriæum, where, at her request, he held a grand review of his army. After the native battalions had marched past, he directed the Greeks to form into phalanx and exhibit a charge. This they did so effectually, advancing at a run with their spears presented, and with loud shouts, towards the Persian tents, that the queen and her people were seized with alarm and fled from the field, while the Greeks burst out laughing, and Cyrus was overjoyed to see the terror with which they inspired his countrymen.

Advancing by Iconium, through Lycaonia and Cappadocians" was addressed. A few broken columns and *debris* now alone mark its site.

padocia, towards Cilicia, he sent Epiaxa with a Greek escort under Meno, a Thessalian captain, to go by a direct route over the mountains into her own country. Cyrus himself found the pass over Mount Taurus, which was called the Cilician Gates, occupied by Syennesis. This pass being a narrow defile between rocks, 3600 feet above the sea, might easily have been held ; but Syennesis (who was probably acting all along in collusion with Cyrus) had now the excuse that his flank had been turned by Meno, and that he was threatened on the other side by the fleet of Cyrus ; so he evacuated the pass, and the invading army, without resistance, marched through the Gates of Cilicia. Descending into a beautiful plain, they came to Tarsus, even then a large and rich city, afterwards the rival in wealth, literature, and science of Athens, Antioch, and Alexandria, and famous for all time as the birthplace of St Paul.

Here it seemed as if the expedition would come to an end. For it was now clear that Pisidia (which they had passed) was not the object of the march ; the Greek soldiers suspected that they were being led against the King ; they said that they had not been engaged for this service, and that they would go no farther. Clearchus, the Lacedæmonian, the sternest disciplinarian and harshest officer in the army, tried to force his men to proceed. They at once mutinied, and he narrowly escaped being stoned. Laying aside all his usual imperiousness of manner, he stood before his men weeping, while they regarded him in tacit astonishment. He then broke silence, and said "Do not wonder, soldiers,

at my grief, for Cyrus has been my friend and benefactor. I was anxious to serve him in payment of his past kindnesses to me. But since you are unwilling to accompany him on this expedition, I am reduced to the painful alternative of abandoning either him or you. Whether it is right or not, I have made up my mind what to do. I will never abandon *you*. Since you will not obey me, I will follow you. You are to me country, friends, allies. Be assured that wherever you go, I shall go also." The attitude thus taken by Clearchus at once restored him to the confidence of the soldiers, more especially as, when Cyrus sent for him, he adroitly refused to go. His next step was to invite opinions as to the course it would be best to pursue under the circumstances. Clearly, it would be now difficult to get home without the consent of Cyrus, and a little consultation among the soldiers showed that Cyrus was not likely to give that consent. At last it was resolved to send a deputation to the Prince, and ask what was really the service on which they were engaged. Cyrus had an answer at once ready for them. He said that "he expected to find his enemy, Abrocomas, twelve days' march forward, on the banks of the Euphrates. If they found him there they would chastise him; if not, they would consider then what was to be done." The soldiers were not really dupes of this particularly vague answer. But Clearchus had "played them" like fishes. By seeming to yield he had conquered. They contented themselves with asking higher pay, which Cyrus at once granted, raising the wages of each soldier from about 16 shillings to

£1, 4s. per month. On this understanding, the army again marched forward and reached Issus, the last town of Cilicia on the sea-coast. Here the ships of Cyrus brought up some reinforcements, and among them Cheirisophus, the Spartan general, with 700 men.

Beyond were "the gates of Cilicia and Syria," two fortresses about five hundred yards apart, with a stream flowing between them. And this aperture, being the only entrance into Syria, was one of the most defensible positions in the whole march. Cyrus had appointed his fleet to meet him here to assist in forcing it. But the one fortress had been abandoned by Syennesis, and the other by the outpost of Abrocomas; and the Grecian army passed through these gates also unchallenged. They advanced along the coast to Myriandrus, a Phœnician settlement. This was the last time, for many a long day, that any of them were destined to look upon the sea. Here two of the Greek captains deserted in a merchant vessel. But Cyrus had the adroitness to "make capital" out of the circumstance. He addressed the army, and showed that he might easily have the deserters captured by his war-galleys, but that he abstained from doing so. "Let them go, therefore," said he, "and remember that they have behaved worse to me than I have to them." The Greeks, even such as had before been disinclined to the expedition, on seeing the generosity of Cyrus, now accompanied him with greater pleasure and cheerfulness. Twelve days' march from this point brought them to the large town of Thapsacus, on the banks of the Euphrates. Here a halt

was made, and Cyrus formally announced to the Greek captains that his march was directed to Babylon, against the Great King. The soldiers, hearing this, felt or feigned anger, and declared that they would not go forward without a handsome present. Cyrus at once promised to give every man five minas of silver (£20) as soon as they should reach Babylon; and while they were debating on the offer Meno persuaded his men to earn favour with Cyrus by crossing the Euphrates before the rest had made answer. They followed his advice, and crossed the river at once. Cyrus was delighted. He sent high commendations to the soldiers and secret presents to Meno; and then marching himself through the river, he was followed by all the army. In passing the stream no one was wetted above the breast; and the people of Thapsacus declared that the river had never before been fordable on foot. Every one said that "it was a divine providence, and that the river clearly made way for Cyrus as the future king." After crossing the Euphrates, the Cyreians marched for nine days along its left bank till they came to the river Araxes, one of its affluents, where they halted, and collected provisions from the villages to serve them in the desert which they were now entering. For five days hence they passed through what Xenophon calls "Arabia," a country level as the sea and full of wormwood. All the other shrubs were aromatic, and there was not a tree to be seen. Here they found wild asses, ostriches, bustards, and antelopes. The horsemen of the army had some sport with these. They found the flesh of the wild

ass like venison, but more tender, and that of the bustard delicious. The ostrich by its running flight entirely beat them, and not one could be caught. They halted at the river Mascas, and again laid in provisions before entering for a second time the desert, which lasted for a march of thirteen days, during which beasts died for want of fodder, corn failed, and the soldiers lived entirely on flesh. Cyrus pushed along over this part of the way with the utmost expedition. The marches were forced; and at one place where the baggage-waggons had stuck in some mud, Cyrus impatiently ordered the Persian nobles who were round him to assist in extricating them. In an instant they doffed their purple cloaks, and, all arrayed as they were in splendid vests and embroidered trousers, and with their gold chains and bracelets on, they plunged into the mire and executed his orders.

The "Anabasis" was now nearly concluded. They came to Pylæ, or "the Gates," a defile leading from Mesopotamia into the Babylonian territory, only a hundred and eight miles north of the great city. Opposite to this, over the Euphrates, was a town called Charmande, from which the soldiers, on rafts, got provisions, and wine made from dates. Here, on the eve of the conclusion of the march, the safety of the whole army was endangered by a brawl between the soldiers of Meno and those of Clearchus. They were with difficulty appeased by Cyrus, who assured them that "if anything goes wrong with you Greeks, all these natives whom you see about you will instantly be-

come more hostile than even the army of the Great King."

As it was, the natives who were with Cyrus continued remarkably faithful to him, even now that it was getting rather nervous work; for they were evidently close to the King's army, and the country around them had been cut up by cavalry and the forage burnt. One noble Persian, however, by name Orontes, endeavoured at this moment to go over to Artaxerxes. This man was a born traitor and sycophant. On two previous occasions he had alternately plotted against Cyrus and whined to him for forgiveness. He now volunteered to go out on reconnaissance, and at the same time sent off a letter to the King, saying that he was going to come over to him with a thousand of the Cyreian horse. But the messenger to whom he intrusted this document took it to Cyrus. Orontes was arrested and taken into Cyrus's tent, where he was tried by a council of seven Persians and Clearchus. According to the report of Xenophon, Cyrus gravely and temperately stated the case against him, and the council unanimously condemned him to death. Orontes was led away to the tent of a confidential eunuch, and "no man afterwards saw him either alive or dead."

Cyrus now advanced cautiously for three days through the Babylonian territory. At the end of the third day's march he held a midnight review of his army, expecting that the King would give him battle next day. He found that he had a force of 12,900 Greeks and 100,000 natives. Reports of the royal

army represented them as 1,206,000 strong! But Cyrus addressed the generals and captains of the Greeks, and assured them that the difference of numbers was of no importance. He said, "I will tell you from experience what you will have to encounter—vast numbers and plenty of shouting and noise. If you stand firm, I am really ashamed to tell you what poor creatures you will find these natives to be. Only be men, and I will make those of you who wish to go home the envy of your countrymen; though I hope that many of you will elect to remain in my service."

The next day there was no appearance of the King; but they came on a trench which had been dug to impede their progress. It was 30 feet broad and 18 deep, and stretched for more than 40 miles across the plain of Babylon, leaving a passage of only 20 feet between itself and the Euphrates. But even this laboriously-constructed obstacle was made useless by being left undefended; and the Cyreian army marched quietly through the narrow passage, and concluded the day without seeing the enemy. Cyrus now sent for Silanus, the chief soothsayer of the Greeks, and presented him with 3000 darics (£2600), because on the eleventh day previous he had foretold that the King would not fight within ten days. Cyrus had then said, "If your prophecy comes true I will give you ten talents; for unless the King fights within ten days he will not fight at all."

It was quite natural now for every one to suppose that Artaxerxes had abandoned the idea of resistance. So from this the army advanced in loose order, many

of the men's arms piled on beasts of burden, and Cyrus himself riding at ease in a chariot. But at noon on the next day but one after their leaving the trench, when they were at a place called Cunaxa,* a mounted scout came in at full speed, shouting both in Greek and Persian that the King was coming up with a vast army in battle array. In hot haste they began to form, thinking that the King would be upon them before they should have time to get into rank. But it was not till the afternoon that they got sight of, first, a white cloud of dust, second, a sort of blackness in the plain, next a flashing of brass; and then the spears and lines of men became visible. It was a mighty mass. On their left, opposite the Greeks, were cavalry in white armour, troops with wicker targets, and Egyptians with long wooden shields reaching to their feet, while before the line at intervals were scythed chariots to cut through the ranks of their opponents. In the centre was the Great King, surrounded by a close phalanx. But though in the centre of his own line, that line was so immense that he was actually beyond the extreme left of the army of Cyrus. Despite what Cyrus had said about the shouting of the natives, they now came on quietly enough with a slow even step.

The right of the Cyreian line, resting on the Euphrates, consisted of the Greeks, commanded in their

* This name is nowhere mentioned by Xenophon. The names of battle-fields are often left at first unsettled. It is given by Plutarch (Artaxerxes, c. 8). The spot was about fifty miles from Babylon.

several divisions by Clearchus, Proxenus, Meno, and others. To the left of them was the native force, under Arizæus, a Persian general, on the extreme left, and with Cyrus commanding in person in the centre. This young pretender to the throne of Persia seemed full of hope and enthusiasm, and despised all precautions. While all others wore helmets, he presented himself for the battle with his head uncovered.

Riding along the front of his line with a small staff, he came to where the Greeks were stationed, and calling out to Clearchus, told him to lead his troops against the enemy's centre, where the King was, and strike there; "for if," he said, "we are victorious in that quarter, the day is ours." As the event showed, this order was sound enough; and if Clearchus had had sufficient contempt for his opponents to carry it out, probably the course of subsequent history would have been changed. But in order to do so, the Greeks would have had to pass before the entire line of the enemy (less than half a mile distant) with their right or unshielded side exposed. Secondly, they would run the risk of being outflanked on the extreme left, owing to the great length of the enemy's line. Under these circumstances, Clearchus determined in his own mind to stick to the river, which protected his right flank, and to charge where he was. So he merely replied to Cyrus that "he would see that all went right."

In the meanwhile Xenophon (who is now for the first time mentioned) rode up to Cyrus and asked if he had any commands. Cyrus directed him to tell the

men that the omens of sacrifice were quite favourable. Just then a noise was heard in the ranks, and on the Prince asking what it was, Xenophon told him that the Greeks were passing the watchword of the day, "Jupiter the Preserver and Victory." On hearing this, Cyrus said, "I accept it with all my heart," and rode away to his own station.

The Greeks now sang the pæan, and began to advance against the enemy. As they advanced, their line fluctuated a little, and those who were thrown out began to run, and gradually all took to running, at the same time raising their well-known shout to Mars, and rattling their spears against their shields. The moral effect of this astounding charge was too much for their native opponents. Before the Greeks had got within a bow-shot of them they turned and fled, and even the drivers of the scythed chariots leapt down and ran away, leaving their horses to run wildly among friends and foes alike. The entire left wing of the King's army was routed, and the Greeks pursued them on and on, without losing a man,—but uselessly, because the centre, with Artaxerxes in the midst, was still untouched.

Cyrus observed with satisfaction the victorious course of the Greeks; and those about him, with Oriental flattery, prematurely saluted him as king. But he was not carried away. He kept his body-guard of 600 horsemen drawn up in close rank, and steadily watched the movements of Artaxerxes. Presently the Great King, as no one attacked him in front, showed signs of wheeling round, as if to take the

Greeks in the rear. On this Cyrus moved down upon him, and, charging fiercely with his 600 horse, broke through and routed the 6000 cavalry that formed the body-guard of the King, and killed their commander with his own hand. In the eagerness of pursuit his horsemen got dispersed, and only Cyrus, accompanied by a handful of men—chiefly those who were called his “table-companions”—bore straight on to the spot where Artaxerxes was exposed to view with a little band around him. Maddened with excitement, Cyrus cried out, “I see the man!” and, rushing at his brother, struck him an ill-aimed blow with his lance, wounding him slightly through the breastplate. At the same moment Cyrus himself was pierced by a javelin under the eye, and falling from his horse, was slain. Eight of his chiefs fell around him, and his faithful eunuch, seeing him fall, threw himself on the body, and clasping it in his arms, was put to death. The head and the right hand of Cyrus were cut off, and all his native troops, composing the left wing of the army, took to flight, and retreated to their camp of the night before, a distance of eight miles from the battle-field. Thus ended the battle of Cunaxa (September 3, 401 B.C.) and the expedition of Cyrus.

At first sight there is a halo of romance over the whole enterprise, not unlike that which surrounds the ill-fated Rebellion of 1745. And as the generous impulses in our nature prompt us to take the side of a gallantly-maintained but unfortunate cause, so it is difficult not to sympathise with young Cyrus and his Greeks, as against the Persian King and his over-

whelming masses of inferior troops. And yet, after all, the attempt, however boldly devised and ably carried out, was only an act of treason without any adequate justification. The expedition of Cyrus was prompted by no patriotic or public motive, but solely by personal ambition of the most selfish kind, and was nothing short of fratricidal in its intent, being directed against a brother, who, as far as we know, had done Cyrus no wrong, except that of being his senior, and of having been chosen for the throne. In the guilt of these motives the Greeks were not implicated; they were engaged on a false pretence, and were not informed of the real nature of the service on which they were to be employed till it was virtually too late to withdraw from it. On the other hand, they were not fighting for a cause, but for pay; they were not like the Jacobites of "the '45," but were mercenaries, whom Cyrus had retained, just as an Indian prince might retain a body of European soldiers, as likely to beat a very disproportionate number of his countrymen. And yet there was something fine in the relationship between Cyrus and the Greeks; it was not entirely based upon considerations of money, but consisted greatly in personal attachment. Cyrus, young as he was, had sufficient greatness of character to inspire many of the Greek captains with an enthusiasm for his person. They served him, as Xenophon tells us, partly from regard, and partly because they had an imaginative notion that great things were to be achieved in his service. Cyrus, unlike most Orientals, had the good sense to see the

policy of perfect good faith to his friends ; he led the Greeks to rely on him implicitly, and, unlike one with despotic traditions, he treated them as citizens, on a basis of fair reasoning between man and man. Many a trait does Xenophon record of his behaviour *en bon camarade*. It is true that all this time he was on his promotion, and therefore on his best behaviour. But there was something really Napoleonic in his ascendancy over the minds of men. These powers, thus early manifested, might have had a formidable influence on the affairs of mankind. Xenophon justly thinks that no one who had sat on the throne of Persia since the great Cyrus could have compared in ability with Cyrus the younger. Mr Grote is of opinion that, if he had succeeded in his enterprise, he would successfully have played the game of employing the Greeks against each other, and that, forestalling the work of Macedonia, he would have destroyed the independence of Greece by subjugating her to Persia. On the whole, then, it may have been of advantage to the interests of civilisation that Clearchus did not better follow out, at the battle of Cunaxa, the instructions of Cyrus.

CHAPTER III.

THE RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND GREEKS TO THE SHORE OF THE EUXINE.

THE Greeks having pursued for about three miles their unprofitable victory over the left wing of the King's army, halted ; when they perceived the enemy advancing towards them from the direction of their own lines. They immediately formed, with the Euphrates in their rear, and having sung the pæan, charged. The Persians fled with even greater precipitancy than before. The Greeks followed, without overtaking them, till the sun set, when they stopped and resolved to march back to their tents. On arriving there, they found that the camp had been plundered by the King's troops, and that all their provisions were gone. They lay down fasting, having had neither dinner nor supper during the day. But as yet they had not heard a word of the death of Cyrus. They believed him to be victorious, as they had been, and they looked forward to the morrow to bring them the reward of all their labours.

At sunrise a message came from Ariæus, the Persian

general of Cyrus, who had fled back with the native army to the camp from which they had come two days before, saying that Cyrus was dead, and that if the Greeks would join him he would take them back to the coast of Asia Minor, but that he would not wait for them more than twelve hours. To this Clearchus replied, "Would that Cyrus were alive! but since he is no more, tell Ariæus that we have beaten the King's army, and that if he comes to us we will set him on the throne of Persia." While awaiting an answer to this proposal, the Greeks slaughtered the bullocks and asses which had drawn their waggons, and with them made a breakfast.

Ariæus had not heart enough to avail himself of the chance which was offered him. He told the Greeks that the other Persians of higher rank than himself would never let him be king. But he swore solemnly to guide the Greeks in safety back. He said that it would be impossible to return by the route on which they had come, for they would not be able to get provisions for the desert, but that they must go by the northern route, which lay through fertile countries. To begin with, he led them eastwards into the Babylonian territory. This was an alluvial plain, full of villages, and which, under certain circumstances, might have been a trap for an army, for it lay between the Euphrates and the Tigris, and was divided into parallelograms by the wall of Media and four successive ship-canal's running across from the one river to the other. No doubt Ariæus was right in saying that escape would be impossible by way of the deserts of

Mesopotamia and Arabia. But it is not likely that he really meant to undergo all the difficulties of conducting the Greeks home by way of the Tigris. In all probability he used the offer of the Greeks to intimidate Artaxerxes, and to obtain an amnesty for himself on condition of abandoning his allies, which, in fact, he immediately did.

In the mean time the vacillation of the Persians was wonderful. They not only did not attack the Greeks, but instead of starving them in the barren country, they admitted them within the wall of Media, where they could get plenty of provisions, and where they might have used the canals and rivers as defences, which would have enabled them to hold an almost impregnable position, and where they might have made a military settlement threatening the very existence of the reigning dynasty. Presently this danger appears to have occurred to the Persians, and with it the expediency of "making a golden bridge for a flying enemy." For they sent Tissaphernes the satrap to profess friendly feelings for the Greeks, and to offer to escort them back to Greece. Under his guidance the Greeks crossed two of the canals, and arrived at Sitace, a town on the Tigris a little below Bagdad. Here they received false information that the Persians were going to destroy the bridge over the Tigris. This news was fabricated with the view of hurrying them out of Babylonia, lest at the last moment they should resolve to settle there. The *ruse* was successful, for the Greeks guarded the bridge during a night, and next morning crossed it with all expedition.

Having been got fairly over the Tigris into the province of Media, they were conducted north-westward, along the river, by Tissaphernes, for ten days, partly through a desert country, and with only two remarkable incidents: first, that they met an illegitimate brother of Artaxerxes bringing up a large army to assist him, and who halted his troops to see the Greeks pass by. Clearchus, being aware of this, made his men march two abreast, so that his line seemed almost interminable, and inspired respect in the minds of the natives. Second, that on arriving at some villages which were the private property of Parysatis (the queen-mother, who had favoured the cause of Cyrus), Tissaphernes allowed the Greeks, instead of purchasing provisions in them, to plunder them.

Soon after this they arrived at the river Zab, which flows into the Tigris. On its banks they rested, and here Clearchus resolved to have a conference with Tissaphernes, in order, if possible, to put a stop to the feelings of mutual suspicion which had evidently been arising between the Greeks and their Persian conductors. The substance of the discussion which took place is put by Xenophon into the form of elaborate speeches on each side; and he represents Tissaphernes, after professing the most pure and beautiful motives, to have wound up with an Oriental compliment to the Greeks, saying that "while the Great King alone was allowed to wear the upright turban * on his head, any other man, who had the Greeks on his side, might wear it in his heart." This inuendo, which was probably used in

* One of the insignia of royalty in ancient Persia.

reality, meant that Tissaphernes had such an admiration for the Greeks that he could not quite relinquish the idea of making himself king by their assistance. It was in allusion to the offer which had been refused by Ariæus ; and the delicate compliment seems to have worked so powerfully with Clearchus as to have entirely thrown him off his guard. In spite of all remonstrances of cautious persons, he accepted an invitation to go to a still more confidential interview with Tissaphernes within the Persian lines, and he persuaded four generals, including Proxenus and Meno, and twenty captains, of the Greeks, to accompany him.

No sooner had they arrived at the tent of Tissaphernes than all the captains and the small guard of honour that accompanied them were cut down, and the generals were seized and bound and sent up to the King. Four of them were immediately put to death by beheading. Meno alone had his life granted to him, probably on account of certain traitorous communications which he had previously held with Tissaphernes. Xenophon, after relating these events, sketches in a masterly way the characters of the different generals, and stigmatises Meno as a bad and false man. He records, with apparent satisfaction, that Meno was ultimately put to death with lingering tortures. This nemesis was due to the still powerful influence of the queen-mother, Parysatis, who appears to have played the part of a vindictive Juno towards all who had been hostile or unfaithful to her favourite Cyrus and his Greeks.

In the mean time, one of the guard of honour having

escaped, wounded, from the massacre, brought the news of it, and of the arrest of the generals, to the Greek camp. The receipt of this intelligence caused great panic and depression in the little army, who reflected that they were isolated in a hostile and treacherous country, a thousand miles from home, without guides or commissariat, with many large rivers before them, and the enemy's cavalry all round. "Reflecting," says Xenophon, "on these circumstances, and being disheartened at them, few tasted food for that evening, few kindled fires, and many did not come to the place of arms during the night, but lay down to rest where they severally happened to be, unable to sleep for sorrow and longing for their country, their parents, their wives, and their children, whom they never expected to see again." The feelings of the Greeks at this unhappy moment might be compared, to some extent, with those of our own betrayed army at Cabul in 1842, when on the eve of their despairing attempt to regain British India through the mountains, the snow, and the enemy. But the Greeks had better grounds of hope left to them, for their military *prestige* was quite unimpaired. They had not lost a man except by foul and treacherous murder, and they had never yet found the native troops, in whatever numbers, able to stand up against them.

But it seemed as if there were only one man to whose mind these encouraging thoughts suggested themselves. And that man was Xenophon. But for him, it seemed likely that the Greeks would have abandoned themselves to unresisting despair. Xeno-



phon himself considered that in the hour of panic he received a special inspiration and a divine impulse to act. He tells us that in the dreadful night following the murder of the generals he was visited by a dream. He dreamed that his father's house had been set on fire by lightning. Full of Greek superstition, he asked himself the interpretation of this dream. On the one hand, he thought that it might be interpreted favourably, as indicating "a light from Jupiter." On the other hand, he reflected that, as Jupiter is King, it might portend "destruction from the King of Persia." With practical good sense he adds, in his account of the matter, that a dream can best be interpreted by what follows it; and what actually followed in this case was that Xenophon sprang up, awoke the surviving generals and captains of the Greek force, and in spirited language addressed them.

He reminded his countrymen of their late easy victory over the King's troops at Cunaxa, and of the glorious resistance made by their forefathers to the armies of Darius and Xerxes at Marathon and Salamis. He pointed out the utter perfidy and falseness of every one of the Persians, now that Cyrus was dead, and he earnestly impressed upon them that they must trust to no one but themselves, and to nothing but their own swords for deliverance. The circumstances under which he spoke were peculiar: the removal of Clearchus had reduced the army to a democracy, and in such a body fair reasoning and skilful oratory were sure to be effective. By means of them, Xenophon, in this midnight debate, turned the hearts of all like one man, and they

unanimously adopted the arrangements best calculated to secure their retreat.

Next day, having burnt their carriages and tents, and all superfluous baggage, and having dined, they formed themselves into a hollow square, with the baggage-bearers in the centre. Cheirisophus, as being a Lacedæmonian, was put in command of the front; four of the captains were chosen to command the flanks; while Xenophon and Timasion, as the two youngest, took charge of the rear. In this order they crossed the Zab, marching so as to follow upwards the left bank of the Tigris. The cowardly Persians did not dare to dispute with them the passage of the Zab; but as soon as they were marching on the other side, two hundred cavalry, and four hundred archers and slingers, came after them to harass their rear. Some Greeks were wounded, and they had no means of retaliation, having neither horsemen nor slingers. Xenophon, however, actually made a sally on foot with a few men against the Persian cavalry, who, instead of cutting him off, turned and fled as soon as he appeared. The Greek army, thus harassed, only marched two and a half miles during the day, when they got to some villages. Here Xenophon set to work to make use of the lesson which, he said, the enemy had given them. With the horses that they had with them he organised a small troop of fifty cavalry, and he got together as many as two hundred Rhodians, skilled in using the sling with leaden bullets instead of stones. During a day's halt these preparations were completed, and then the Greeks, starting very early in the morning, got over a deep

ravine which lay in their course before the stupid Persians had taken any measures to stop them. When they were fairly over, the attack on their rear was recommenced, but this time with 1000 cavalry and 4000 archers and slingers. The Greeks, however, did not as before passively endure the annoyances of the enemy. The trumpet sounded, the fifty horsemen charged, the slingers plied their weapons, and the infantry advanced to their support. The natives at once fled in confusion to the ravine, leaving many dead on the field, whose bodies the Greeks mutilated in order to strike terror into the enemy.

They were now allowed without molestation to reach the banks of the Tigris, where they found an ancient deserted city, with massive walls. This the Greeks called Larissa, which was a common name for the ancient Pelasgian towns with Cyclopean masonry in Thessaly and elsewhere. But it has been conjectured that the name really told them was Al Resen, and that the city was the Resen of Scripture. At the present day it is called Nimrúd; and it was here, on the site of the Nineveh of antiquity, that Mr Layard brought to light so many interesting remains of the ancient Assyrian empire. A further march of eighteen miles conducted the Greeks to another deserted city, which they understood to be called Mespila. It was nearly opposite the modern Mossul, and appears to have been originally a continuation of the once colossal Nineveh or Ninus. These cities, or city, had been devastated by Cyrus the Great, and abandoned about one hundred and fifty years before Xenophon came there.

During the next day's march, which was twelve miles, Tissaphernes came upon them in force. He had with him his own cavalry, all the native troops who had served under Cyrus, and who had marched so long as comrades to the Greeks, the division of Orontes, the King's son-in-law, and that additional army which had been brought up by the King's illegitimate brother, and which the Greeks had seen before. These vast masses of men surrounded the Greeks like a cloud on every side except the front. They never charged, however, and only used missiles. The Rhodian slingers and the Greek bowmen immediately answered with the utmost effect, never missing a shot in such dense ranks, and the Persians presently retreated on all sides.


The next day the Greeks altered to some extent the disposition of their force, as the single hollow square was found too inflexible in cases of narrow roads, hills, or bridges. For more easy adaptation to such circumstances, they formed six companies of one hundred men each, subdivided into smaller companies of twenty-five, each under its own officer, with directions to fall behind or close up as the exigencies of the march might require. In this form they marched for four days, and on the fifth came to some hills. On commencing the ascent they found the enemy on the heights above them, and they saw the native officers flogging on their men to attack them with darts, stones, and arrows. Many were wounded, and their advance was hindered, until they had succeeded in sending up a detachment from their right wing to occupy a height above the Persians, who, thus threatened, desisted from the attack, and

allowed the Greeks to gain a place which Xenophon describes as "a palace amid villages," which can still be identified * in the modern Zákhu. It was a satrap's palace, "like a baronial castle, surrounded by the cottages of serfs and retainers." Here they stayed three days, tending the wounded, and enjoying the satrap's stores of provisions and wine. As soon as they started again Tissaphernes was upon them. But they reached a village, which served them as a defensive work, and enabled them to keep the enemy off. When night came the Persians drew back for six miles, because their horses were always picketed at night by foot-ropes (just as in India at the present day), and could not be got ready suddenly; so they kept a long way off to avoid surprise. The Greeks took advantage of this, and stole a march upon them in the night, and did not see them for two days.

On the fourth day from Zákhu they found the enemy in front of them, on an eminence which commanded the road. Cheirisophus halted the men and sent for Xenophon, who came galloping up from the rear. It was obviously necessary to dislodge the Persians from their front, as Tissaphernes with his army was coming up behind. Xenophon offered to take a select detachment from the van and centre of the army, and scale a height which commanded the hill on which the enemy were posted. He proceeded to do so, and the natives, seeing what was intended, detached some of their own troops to occupy the summit before the

* Mr Ainsworth's 'Travels in the Track of the Ten Thousand Greeks,' p. 144.

Greeks. There was thus a perfect race between the two detachments, each struggling to get up the hill before the other, and each cheered on by the shouts of its own army. The Greeks, by great exertions, won the race and occupied the summit, and the natives at once dispersed from their position on the line of march, leaving the passage clear. A little incident which occurred during this operation shows the democratic spirit of the Greek army. While Xenophon was riding up the ascent and encouraging the infantry, one of the soldiers cried out, "It's not fair, Xenophon, for you to be riding, while I have to go on foot and carry my shield." In an instant Xenophon jumped from his horse, seized the man's shield, and took his place in the rank, struggling on with the rest. But his heavy horseman's corselet distressed him; and the other soldiers abused the discontented one, and threw stones at him, till he was glad to resume his shield, and Xenophon remounted. Cheirisophus and the army marched onward to some villages on the Tigris, where Xenophon with his detachment rejoined them. The Greeks were now in perplexity, for before them lay high mountains, and on their left the Tigris was very deep, and they could see cavalry on the other side. The generals held a council of war, and carefully questioned their prisoners as to the different routes. They learned that to go eastwards would lead them to Susa and Ecbatana, the summer residence of Artaxerxes; over the Tigris to the left lay the direct path to Lydia and Ionia; the mountains in front were in the country of the Carduchi (Kurds), a warlike tribe, not subject to the Great



King. The route over these mountains would lead into the rich country of Armenia, where the Tigris might easily be forded near its source, and whence the Euxine, leading them to Greece, might be reached. This was the course which it was determined to take, albeit it was now the middle of November, and full late in the year for trying mountain-passes. Starting during the last watch of the night, they got over the intervening plain under the cover of darkness, and thus bade adieu to Tissaphernes and his Persians. All the light-armed men were placed in the front under Cheirisophus, who led them over the first summit before the Kurds had perceived their approach. Marching slowly on, they occupied some villages which lay in the recesses of the mountains, and which the inhabitants evacuated, refusing to listen to all proposals of amity. The rear under Xenophon, consisting of heavy-armed men and baggage, only got up after nightfall, and suffered slightly from an attack of the Kurds, which might have been serious if it had been made in greater force. "Thus," says Mr Ainsworth, "they accomplished their entrance into Kurdistan without opposition, and crossed one of the most defensible passes which they were destined to meet. This is the point where the lofty mountain-chain—now designated as *Jebél Jûdí*, and the same, according to Chaldean, Syriac, and Arabian traditions, as that on which the Ark rested—comes down to the very flood of the Tigris, which it encloses in an almost impassable barrier of rock."

The Greeks quartered themselves for the night in

the Kurdish houses, which they found well stocked with provisions, and with an abundance of copper pots. The hills all round were lit up with the watch-fires of the people. In the morning the generals determined to diminish their encumbrances by abandoning the greater part of their baggage-cattle and all their Persian prisoners. Having given an order to this effect, they took their stand at a narrow place on the march, and inspected all that was being taken onwards. They thus turned back whatever was not desirable to be brought, but Xenophon implies that some pretty female captives were smuggled through.

For the next two days the Greeks advanced, through storm and rain and the guerilla attacks of the Kurds, till they came to a place where further progress seemed impossible, as a lofty pass in front was occupied by the enemy. But they had made prisoners of two of the natives, and these were separately questioned as to the existence of any other route. One prisoner denied that there was any, and he was then put to death *pour encourager l'autre*, who at once offered to conduct them round by another road, but said that there was one height commanding it which must be occupied beforehand. Two thousand Greeks volunteered for this service and started in the evening, while Xenophon made a feint of marching along the direct route, which caused the Kurds to commence rolling down masses of stone upon it from above, an amusement* which they

* Stone-rolling as a mode of attacking the traveller seems still in vogue among the Kurdish mountain-passes. Major Millingen, in his 'Wild Life among the Koords' (1870), records that in a

continued harmlessly during the night. In the mean time the party of two thousand effected their operation. They occupied the height pointed out by their guide, and in the morning, under cover of the mist, they stole on the Kurds who were occupying the direct pass, and to the sound of the trumpet, and with a sudden war-cry, they routed them. Cheirisophus and his men at the first trumpet-note came along the direct road to assist, but they found the position already evacuated, and the pass clear. Xenophon, however, went round by the circuitous route, as it was better suited for the baggage-cattle. He had several skirmishes by the way, but at last joined the main body, when Cheirisophus and he parleyed with the natives, who agreed to give up the dead bodies of all slain Greeks in exchange for the prisoner who had served as guide. Funeral-rites were accordingly performed over

difficult road near Lake Van, while admiring the beauties of the landscape, "several stones began to roll upon us from the side of the mountain. This seeming at first accidental, we hastened our paces with the view of getting clear of a dangerous spot; but no sooner had we advanced a hundred yards farther on than more stones began to fall all round us, while voices could distinctly be heard from the heights above. Alarmed at the prospect of being lapidated to death before the journey was at an end, I shouted to Beheram, showing him a little creek towards which we both made a rush, and where we succeeded in finding shelter. The stones continued to fall, but, fortunately for us, the rocky canopy under which we were admirably protected us. Not knowing what might happen, I resolved, as we could see nothing of the caravan, on firing two shots of my revolver, which our people would take as signals of distress. The signal was soon answered by our men, and several detonations of fire-arms announced a speedy relief."

those of their comrades who had fallen by the formidable arrows of the Kurds. The privilege of discharging this melancholy duty was purchased at the cost of their only guide, a heavy sacrifice in an unknown country. But, nevertheless, they fought their way gallantly through the passes. Whenever the vanguard was opposed, Xenophon ascended the mountains from behind, and outflanked the enemy; and whenever the rear was attacked, Cheirisophus performed a similar service from the front. Thus they painfully advanced; and on the seventh day after first entering the mountains they emerged on an open plain, and saw before them the river Centrites (now called the Buhtán-chài), which separated Kurdistan from Armenia. During these seven days they had suffered more miseries than all which the King and Tissaphernes had inflicted put together. But now they joyfully rested in the villages on the plain, and in all comfort recalled the troubles and dangers which they had passed through.

The next day anxiety returned, for over the river (which was two hundred feet broad) they could see the opposite bank lined with the cavalry and infantry of the satrap of Armenia, and a large body of Kurds was collecting in their rear. The river too seemed to be unfordable. But Xenophon in the night had an encouraging dream:—he dreamed that he had been bound, but that his fetters fell off of their own accord; and next morning, while he was at breakfast, two young men brought him word that they had discovered a ford in a place where the rocks would prevent cavalry

from acting. After a libation of gratitude to the gods, the dispositions for crossing were made. Cheirisophus was to lead the vanguard, followed by the baggage, across the ford; while Xenophon with the rearguard was to make a feint of crossing directly opposite the satrap's troops, so as to threaten them and engage their attention. This plan was carried out, and the native troops, seeing two separate forces apparently crossing, were afraid of being surrounded; and hearing the pæan and the shouts of the men under Cheirisophus, swollen by the voices of the Greek women, of whom there were a good many in the army, they were seized with panic, and retreated, leaving the other side of the river clear. Xenophon had now only to make a lively demonstration against the Kurds who had come to attack him, and on their flight he was enabled to lead his men with all speed across the true ford, and then all the Greeks were safe on the other side.

They were now on the table-lands of Armenia, and, pushing on rapidly in a north-easterly direction, soon rounded the springs of the Tigris, and, passing not far to the west of Lake Van, came in five or six days' march to a pretty stream which Xenophon calls Teleboas, the banks of which were studded with villages. Here the satrap Tiribazus came up with them, and inviting a conference with the generals, he gave them leave to pass through the country, on condition of their taking only necessary supplies, without burning the villages. They proceeded accordingly, being constantly followed by the satrap and his troops. In three days they reached the government house of

Tiribazus, anxiety about which had probably been the cause of his conciliating them, and they made themselves at home in the surrounding hamlets. They were now about 4000 feet above the sea, and it was near the end of November. The sight of watch-fires in the neighbourhood, and other signs of hostility caused the army to bivouac together in the open air. But vast quantities of snow fell during the night, covering men and beasts, and in the morning they were numbed with cold, and Xenophon had to set the example of rising to cut firewood. Then they lit many fires, and the men anointed themselves with unguents which they found in the villages. After this they sent out a clever Greek captain with some men to reconnoitre, and they succeeded in bringing in a Persian captive. This man, being questioned, told them what troops the satrap had, and that he was preparing to intercept them in a pass which lay upon their line of march.

With the greatest energy the generals determined to sally forth and attack Tiribazus where he was, before he could occupy the pass. They succeeded in doing so. They surprised his camp among the mountains, killed some of his men, dispersed the rest, took his tent, his horses, and his couches with silver feet, and made prisoners of his bakers and cup-bearers. The next day they pushed forward with the utmost expedition, and got through the pass which was to have been held against them. Marching through deep snow for three days, they came to what is now called the Murád-sú, being the easterly branch of the Eu-

phrates, which they forded, the water not coming above their middle.

During the next four days they made about fifty miles over an exposed plain, from the Euphrates to a cluster of villages in the Armenian uplands, at a place now called Khanús. In these four marches they endured great sufferings. The snow was often six feet deep; there was a parching north wind which blew directly in their faces, their provisions were very scanty, and the enemy from time to time harassed their rear. Added to this, when we remember that they had only the ordinary light dress of the Greek—Greek sandals with thongs between the toes, and *no stockings*—we may well admire the hardihood shown by these sons of the palæstra. But several of them died, as well as slaves, and baggage-cattle in large numbers. Many got snow-blindness, others lost their toes by mortification, and many suffered from what Xenophon calls *bulimia* (literally ravenous hunger), which, however, does not appear to have been a distinctive disease, but only excessive faintness and inertia from long fasting in the cold. Xenophon had the greatest difficulty in bringing up the stragglers, many of whom wished to be left to their fate. One party of them discovered a hot spring, from which it was difficult to get them to move.

Cheirisophus and the vanguard of course got first to the villages, where they made themselves comfortable in the underground houses of the inhabitants, and where, according to the custom of the country, they sucked "barley-wine" through reeds out of tubs,

which had the grains of barley floating about in them. This "barley-wine" is in general considered to have been beer, but the terms in which Xenophon describes it would seem more applicable to whisky.* He says, "The liquor was very strong, unless one mixed water with it, and a very pleasant drink when one was accustomed to it."

The rear came up by degrees, and fared equally well, feasting on all kinds of meat which the villagers, who had not retreated, hospitably served up to them. They found many horses which were being bred as a tribute for the Great King, and Xenophon and the other officers got a remount. They remained for a week restoring their exhausted energies, and then set forth, taking the head-man of one of the villages as

* Major Millingen, in his 'Wild Life among the Koords,' p. 131, &c., mentions many customs still existing among the Kurdish and Armenian villages, exactly corresponding with the descriptions of Xenophon. He says, "My researches have, I think, put beyond doubt the accuracy of Xenophon's statements, and are of a nature to show the historical, geographical, and ethnological importance which is to be attached to the accounts handed down to posterity by that illustrious writer. Every phrase, every word of his, is found, after an interval of twenty-three centuries, to be of the most scrupulous exactitude, leaving no room for doubt and controversy." Finding in one house a cemented cistern, Major Millingen (p. 128) inquired its use. "The answer was, that almost every family throughout the country had those things. The Mussulmans make use of the cistern to extract from barley a liquor known all through the East by the name of 'bozat,' a fermented sort of malt liquor. The Armenian giaours, my interlocutors would humorously, employ their cisterns to make wine and 'whisky'."

their guide ; but after a day or two this man, having been struck by Cheirisophus, ran away.

Owing to this they did not make a very straight course during their next nine days' march, which brought them to the foot of a formidable pass, guarded, as they could see, by the people of the country. Here a council of war was held, in which some lively banter occurred between Cheirisophus and Xenophon. The former was for marching straight at the enemy, and cutting their way through ; Xenophon recommended that in the night they should send a detachment to occupy the heights above the enemy. "But this," he added, "would be stealing a march, and in any question about *stealing* I am diffident in speaking before Lacedæmonians, who, it is well known, are trained in this art from their boyhood." To this Cheirisophus retorted that "he understood the Athenians also were pretty skilful in stealing the public money. Their men in office invariably did so, and doubtless Xenophon himself was well skilled in the accomplishment : he had better now give them a specimen of his powers." Xenophon justified the ambiguous compliment by producing two natives whom he had caught by an ambush, and who would serve as guides in scaling the mountains. A night expedition was organised, which was perfectly successful. They occupied a height, and in the morning descended on the flank of the enemy, while Cheirisophus attacked them in front, so that they were speedily routed with slaughter. After erecting a trophy on the pass, they marched over it to some well-provisioned villages.

Their next adventure was with the Taochians, a people of Georgia, who lived not in villages but in hill-forts, in which all their provisions and cattle were stored. The Greeks, after five days' march, when their stores were exhausted, came to one of these strongholds, which necessity compelled them to wish to enter. The only access to this place was guarded by the natives, who rolled down masses of rock from above. A system, however, of judicious feints made by the Greek captains caused the enemy to exhaust their ammunition, and then the Cyreians gained the ascent, which was no longer defended by the natives. But a dreadful scene ensued, for the Taochian women first threw their children over the precipice, and then leapt to destruction themselves, being followed by the men. One of the Greeks, trying to hold back a native chief dressed in a rich garment, was drawn after him, and both were dashed to pieces. This wholesale and determined suicide prevented the army taking many prisoners, but they got plenty of cattle and sheep.

From this they passed into the country of the Chalybes, another Georgian tribe. This people was famed in antiquity for traffic in the iron which they found abundantly in their mountains. They have thus given their name to the "chalybeate springs" of modern watering-places. Xenophon says that these were the bravest warriors that they had encountered in their march. They carried immense spears, twenty-two feet long, and short curved knives (like the *kookaries* of the Goorkhas), with which they cut off the heads

of all whom they could overpower. For seven days they harassed the rear of the Greeks, who, as they also kept all their provisions in hill-forts, could get nothing in their country.

But the beginning of the end was now come in the retreat of the Ten Thousand, for in a few days they arrived at the large and wealthy city of Gymnias, thought by some to correspond to the Erzerum of modern times. Here the governor sent out a guide to conduct them through a country with which his own people were at war. And the guide told them that in five days he would lead them to a place whence they could see the Euxine, and that if he failed in this they might kill him. As soon as they had entered the hostile country, he exhorted them to burn and plunder, which doing, they marched on. And on the fifth day they came to the mountain called Theches, held sacred in the neighbourhood; and when the front ranks had reached the summit and caught sight of the sea, they raised a great shout. Xenophon and the rear-guard, hearing it, thought that the army was being attacked in front, for the people whose country they had devastated were hanging about them. But the noise continually increased, as fresh men kept getting to the top and immediately joined in the shouts of the others, and Xenophon thought something extraordinary must have happened. So, mounting his horse, he took the cavalry with him, and galloped forward to give aid, when presently they made out that the soldiers were shouting "*Thalatta! Thalatta!*"—"The Sea! The Sea!" and cheering one another,

Then all began to run, rear-guard and all ; and the baggage-cattle and horses were put to their speed. And when all had got to the top, the men embraced each other, and embraced their generals and captains, weeping. And on a sudden impulse they brought stones, and raised a mighty mound, and made on it a trophy decorated with the hacked shields of their enemies, to commemorate their deliverance. And then, to reward their guide for fulfilling his promise, they loaded him with presents from the public stock, while many soldiers pulled the rings off their fingers and gave them to him, and thus sent him away rejoicing.

Such was the famous incident which has so struck the fancy of the world, that the shout of the Greeks on this occasion has become a household word for subsequent ages. Xenophon records the scene in the most simple terms, merely as an outward fact, without adding a single sentiment or reflection of his own. On the one hand, this may be regarded as a stroke of high art, which would dictate simplicity in relating what was in itself so touching ; on the other hand, it was a part of that Greek reserve and concentration of style which forms so great a contrast to the Gothic sentimentalism of modern times, and which led Xenophon to narrate the march through so many wild and impressive mountain-passes without a word of allusion to the grandeur of the scenery. But he doubtless felt instinctively, without developing into words, all that was implied to his comrades in their first returning glimpse of the sea. Universally to the Greeks the sea

was the emblem of home, or of easy access to their home. To be taken far up country, deep into the continent of Asia, had always hitherto been a thought of vague fear to the Greek soldier, while he was ready for anything within a short distance of the coast. No Greek force before the Ten Thousand had ever ventured anything like so far away from the Ægean ; and they had gone not of deliberate purpose, but being lured on gradually under the influence of Cyrus. The silver gleam of the distant Euxine was to them the restoration of the object of long yearnings, and sudden relief and ecstasy found a vent in the spontaneous shout of *Thalatta!* and in passionate tears.

Full of the thoughts of fatherland, and "of child and wife and slave," all which had hitherto seemed so far but now so near, the Greeks pursued their course, and arrived at a stream separating them from the country of the Macrones, where they found a hostile array drawn up to oppose their crossing. But in the army was a soldier who belonged to this very tribe, from which he had been taken when a boy as a slave to Athens. He had not forgotten his native tongue, and was able to assure his people that the Greeks meant them no harm. So after mutual pledges of amity, the Macrones conducted them for three days through their land, to the boundaries of the Colchians.

Here on the pass over a lofty range a native force was stationed to meet them. The generals took counsel together as to the best means of conducting the attack ; and it was decided not to attack in line,

but in a series of columns extending by short intervals over the whole of the enemy's line. When the men had been put into this form, Xenophon rode along the front, and addressed to them the following pithy exhortation: "Soldiers, these men whom we have before us are the only obstacle in the way of our being where we have so long been striving to be. If possible, we must eat them alive." The soldiers, after hearing these words, made vows of sacrifices to the gods in case of success; and having sung the pæan, they commenced the charge in eighty columns, with archers and skirmishers on their flanks. The enemy, seeing their wings threatened, drew off men to the right and left, and actually left a gap in their centre, at which the Greeks dashed at full speed. The sight of the Greeks running was too much for the Colchians, who now fled in all directions; while the Greeks, rejoicing in their bloodless victory, marched over the pass into some abandoned villages.

In these villages their last adventure occurred. It consisted in their finding a quantity of bee-hives, from which they ate the honey abundantly. But the honey was of a kind common to this day in Asia Minor, made from a species of rhododendron, or from the common rose laurel (*nerium oleander*), and having intoxicating and poisonous qualities. From the effects of this honey large numbers of the soldiers fell stupefied or maddened to the ground, and for two or three days they were *hors de combat*, but at the end of that time all recovered.

Two more marches brought them down to the sea,

at Trapezus (now Trebizond), a large Greek city on the coast of the Colchian territory. Here they remained for a month, being hospitably entertained, resting from their toils, and from time to time plundering the native villages on the neighbouring hills. Here they sacrificed to Jupiter the Preserver, Hercules the Conductor, and other gods, in fulfilment of vows which they had made in different crises of their march. After the sacrifices they celebrated games, of which Xenophon gives a comical account. A steep hill-side was chosen for the race-course, down which horses had to gallop, and, turning round in the sea, to come up again to the altar on the top. "In the descent many rolled over ; but in coming back against the stiff ascent, the horses could hardly get along at a walk. There was consequently great shouting and laughter and cheering from the people."

With these words of light-hearted good-humour, Xenophon concludes his account of the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks from Babylonia to Trebizond, on the Euxine. The retreat itself had occupied five months, and it was now the month of February, in the year 400 B.C. Additional difficulties and troubles awaited them in their return through the outlying Greek colonies ; these were partly of their own creation, and partly owing to the selfishness of their countrymen. A whole year elapsed before the remnant of the Cyreian force was incorporated with the Lacedæmonian army in Asia Minor, and before Xenophon left them. These subsequent events, and with them the later personal career of Xenophon, the chief leader

and the historian of the march, will form the subject of our next chapter. The preceding pages have reflected a brilliant episode of Greek military history. It is true that the Cyreian force encountered no enemies who combined bravery of spirit with the arts of war. Their opponents were effeminate Orientals or half-savage mountaineers. Yet the Greeks had always the odds of either overwhelming numbers, or of difficulties of the ground, against them. Through these their untiring energy and courage, and the *prestige* created by their bold front and their *élan*, alone carried them. They were favoured, of course, by fortune, and also by the errors and the backwardness of their foes. After the affair of Cunaxa, it would seem easy for the King to have wasted the country with his cavalry, to have kept them outside the Median wall, and to have starved them into submission. Again, after Tissaphernes had murdered their officers, it is difficult to see why he did not hold the passage of the Zab against them, or why in the succeeding days he did not attack them in force. Doubtless he would have done so if their march through the plain had continued longer, because his troops were gradually getting accustomed to the idea of encountering Greeks. But from this danger, to which they must ultimately have succumbed, the mountains of Kurdistan opportunely saved them. After that point the difficulties were of a different kind, and such as their Greek versatility and buoyancy of spirit were able to cope with.

The graphic memoir in which Xenophon recorded the fortunes of the Ten Thousand divulged a secret to

the world : this was the secret of the essential weakness of the Persian empire. Henceforth, as Mr Grote observes,* all the military and political leaders of Greece—Agesilaus, Jason of Pheræ, and others, down to Philip and Alexander—were firmly persuaded that, with a tolerably numerous force, they could at any moment succeed in overthrowing the Persian power. This conviction waited for time and opportunity to give it effect. For two generations Persia maintained an influence over the affairs of Greece by subsidising one state against another. But when all the Greek states had fallen under the rule of Macedonia, then the hour struck. Alexander the Great went forth to conquer Persia, and in so doing he changed the face of the world and the course of history. But nothing is more clear than that the revelations of Xenophon had taken hold of his mind, and that the idea of the expedition of Alexander sprang originally from the ‘Anabasis’ of Xenophon.

* History of Greece, vol. ix. p. 248.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUBSEQUENT FORTUNES OF THE TEN THOUSAND, AND NOTICES OF THE LATER LIFE OF XENOPHON.

“WHAT the Greeks did in their march up the country with Cyrus, and what they underwent in their journey to the Euxine Sea; how they arrived at the Greek city of Trebizond, and how they offered the sacrifices which they had vowed to offer for their safety as soon as they should reach a friendly country, has been related in the preceding part of this narrative.” Thus begins the fifth book of the ‘Anabasis,’ and Xenophon now proceeds to record the proceedings of a council which was held at Trebizond to consider the next steps to be pursued. Wearied as the soldiers were by incessant marching and fighting, they desired to perform the rest of the journey before them on ships, and thus to arrive home as Ulysses was described by Homer to have done—“stretched out in sleep.” It was agreed that Cheirisophus should sail away to Byzantium, and persuade Anaxibius, the Lacedæmonian admiral there, to send ships for them.

Cheirisophus having started, foraging-parties of the

army went out to plunder the neighbouring villages. The most extensive operation was that undertaken by about half the army under Xenophon against the Drylæ or Drillians, a warlike tribe among the mountains, of whom nothing further is known. With some difficulty and "not inconsiderable" loss, they took the citadel of these people, and plundered their chief town. As Cheirisophus did not return, and provisions were running short, the Greeks commenced their march by land along the coast, sending the sick and all who were above forty years of age by sea, in a few vessels which they had procured.

In three days they arrived at Cerasus, or Kerasunt, a place which has given its name to that now popular fruit, the cherry, which was first introduced into Europe from Cerasus by the Roman general Lucullus, in the year 73 B.C.* Here the soldiers were reviewed under arms, and were found to be reduced in number by the casualties of the retreat to 8600 men. A division was made of the money that had been obtained by the sale of captives. A tenth part was consecrated to Apollo and to Diana of Ephesus, and each man received his share of the remainder. Starting hence, they fought their way through the country of the

* "The cherry is said to have been introduced into Britain one hundred and twenty years afterwards; but some suppose that the cherries introduced by the Romans into Britain were lost, and they were reintroduced in the time of Henry VIII. by Richard Haines, the fruiterer of that monarch. The Romans extended the cultivation of the cherry to eight varieties. In the British gardens are upwards of forty sorts."—Mr Ainsworth's 'Travels in the Track of the Ten Thousand Greeks.'

Mosynæci, whose metropolis they plundered ; and then came upon another settlement of the Chalybes, engaged in the manufacture of iron, and apparently peaceable in habits. Without further difficulty they reached Cotyora,* a Greek colony from Sinope, and half-way between that place and Trebizond. At this point they had marched in eight months 1860 geographical miles from the plains of Babylon. The Cyreians were not admitted into the town of Cotyora, but they encamped under the walls, and remained here for forty-five days, during which time the thought of remaining altogether appears to have occurred to the minds of some. After all the difficulties they had surmounted, there still lay great obstacles between them and their Grecian fatherland. In the first place, unless they could procure shipping for the force, they would have to pass through the hostile country of Paphlagonia, intersected by four broad rivers—the Thermodon, the Iris, the Halys, and the Parthenius. Negotiations were therefore opened with the people of Sinope to supply them with ships. But, in the mean time, when Xenophon contemplated the brilliant little army still left with him, the idea arose in his mind that it would be a noble thing to employ this force in some enterprise of conquest and colonisation on the Euxine itself. He seems to have thought of attacking and conquering Phasis, or some other non-Hellenic city, and of settling down in the conquered territory with such of the soldiers as might be willing to remain. Patriotically, he thought of the prestige

* No traces of this town can be found at the present day.

and advantage which would be thus gained for Greece; and personally, he doubtless thought of the position which he might himself hold as founder and ruler of a new Hellenic city, which could hardly fail to become rich, powerful, and important. A trifling obstacle, however, thwarted all his plans. Before communicating them to the soldiers, Xenophon, according to his usual custom, and in accordance with the advice of Socrates, determined to take counsel of the gods. He called on the chief soothsayer of the army, by name Silanus, to offer a sacrifice, and consult the omens as to his project of colonisation. Now it so happened that Silanus was in a different position from all the rest of the army; for while they were all returning with their pockets empty, Silanus had managed to bring safely through the march a sum of 3000 darics (£2600), which Cyrus had given him as a reward for a successful divination.* Silanus then was of all things most anxious to get home at once, and to prevent anything which might detain the army and himself with it in Asia Minor. He dared not tell Xenophon that the omens were unfavourable to the main issue, as they were not so, and Xenophon knew all about the rules of divination. But he said that he discerned in the victims some collateral indications of a conspiracy against Xenophon. And he took care to prove the truth of these alleged indications, by prematurely divulging to the army a garbled account of the plans of Xenophon, and thus creating a prejudice against them.

* See above, p. 20.

The promulgation of these designs had, at all events, one good result. For the merchants from Sinope and Heraclea, who had come to the camp, being alarmed by the notion of a powerful military force seizing territory, and disturbing relations in their neighbourhood, came forward and agreed to guarantee transports for the mercenaries to the Hellespont, with the additional promise of a liberal scale of pay, to commence from the first new moon after their departure from Cotyora. Timasion and Thorax, two officers who were especially jealous of Xenophon, urged these offers upon the acceptance of the army, while others loudly accused him of underhand manœuvring to cheat the soldiers into remaining against their will. Xenophon at once rose to rebut these charges; and having showed the impossibility of his detaining the army against its will, and the absurdity of supposing that he could aim at doing so, he concluded by saying,* "If you had continued as destitute and unprovided as you were just now, I should still have looked out for a resource in the capture of some city which would have enabled such of you as chose to return at once, while the rest might stay behind to enrich themselves. But now there is no longer any necessity, since Heraclea and Sinope are sending transports, and Timasion promises pay to you from the next new moon. Nothing can be better; you will go back safely to Greece, and will receive pay for going thither. I desist at once from my scheme, and call upon all who were favourable to desist also. Only let us all keep together until we are on safe ground,

* Abridged by Mr Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. ix. p. 184.


and let the man who lags behind or runs off be condemned as a wrong-doer." This question being put to the vote, every hand was held up in its favour. The last suggestion was a shaft aimed at the soothsayer Silanus, who had decidedly intended to "run off" with his treasure at the earliest opportunity. This indeed he ultimately effected; but for the present the soldiers put down his protestations, threatening him with punishment if he should be found attempting to desert.

Xenophon had satisfied the army with regard to his actions and intentions in the present, but he was shortly afterwards called upon to clear himself of certain charges with regard to the past. It was resolved among the army, during their long halt at Cotyora, that the generals should be called upon to give an account of their conduct during the march, and Xenophon among the rest came in for his share of unfavourable, and not very grateful, review. We have seen how, along the bank of the Tigris, through the passes of Kurdistan, over the uplands of Armenia, throughout the whole march, he was the life and soul of the army. Always fertile in device; always active, ready, and cheerful; equally prompt to counsel others and to meet danger himself—he gradually acquired an ascendancy far beyond that of the other commanders. There seems little doubt that the salvation of the force was greatly due to Xenophon. But now that the troops were comparatively safe on the shore of the Euxine, they forgot, in some instances, the benefit of being commanded, and looked back on the command as a grievance. The following passage is given in full, not

only as an account of what now occurred, but as an illustration of Xenophon's mode of procedure in the army; and also as an attempt to convey, as well as a translation can do this, some idea of his style of writing:—

Some also brought accusations against Xenophon, alleging that they had been beaten by him, and charging him with having behaved insolently. On this, Xenophon stood up and called on him who had spoken first to say where he had been beaten. He answered, "Where we were perishing with cold, and when the snow was deepest." Xenophon rejoined, "Come, come; in such severe weather as you mention, when provisions had failed, and we had not wine so much as to smell to,—when many were exhausted with fatigue, and the enemy were close behind,—if at such a time I behaved insolently, I acknowledge that I must be more vicious than an ass, which, they say, is too vicious to feel being tired. Tell us, however, why you were beaten. Did I ask you for anything, and beat you when you would not give it me? Did I ask anything back from you? Was I quarrelling about a love affair? Did I maltreat you in my cups?" As the man said that there was nothing of this kind, Xenophon asked him, Whether he was one of the heavy-armed troops? He answered "No." Whether he was a targeteer? He said he was "not that either, but a free man, who had been sent to drive a mule by his comrades." On this Xenophon recognised him, and asked him, "What! are you the man who was conveying the sick person?" "Ay, by Jupiter, I am," said he, "for you compelled me to do it, and you scattered about the baggage of my comrades." "The scattering," rejoined Xenophon, "was something in this way: I distributed it to others to carry, and ordered them to bring it to me again; and having got it back, I restored it all safe to you as soon as you had produced the man that I gave you in charge. But hear, all of

you," he continued, "in what way the affair happened, for it is worth listening to. A man was being left behind because he was able to march no farther. I knew nothing of him, except that he was one of us. And I compelled you, sir, to bring him, that he might not perish; for, if I mistake not, the enemy was pressing upon us." This the complainant acknowledged. "Well, then," said Xenophon, "after I had sent you on, did not I catch you, as I came up with the rearguard, digging a trench to bury the man, when I stopped and commended you? But while we were standing by, the man drew up his leg, and those who were there cried out that he was alive. And you said, 'He may be as much alive as he likes, for I shan't carry him.' On this I struck you, it is quite true, for you seemed to me to have been aware that the man was alive." "Well, then," exclaimed the other, "did he die any the less after I had rendered him up to you?" "Why, we shall all die," said Xenophon; "but is that any reason that we should be buried alive?" Hereupon all the assembly cried out that Xenophon had not beaten the fellow half enough. And this complaint having been disposed of, no others were brought against Xenophon, who then addressed the soldiers, saying, "I acknowledge to have struck many men for breach of discipline—men who were content to owe their preservation to your orderly march and constant fighting, while they themselves left the ranks and ran on before, so as to have an advantage over you in looting. Had we all acted as they did, we should have perished to a man. Sometimes, too, I struck men who were lagging behind with cold and fatigue, or were stopping the way so as to hinder others from getting forward. I struck them with my fist, in order to prevent them from being struck by the lance of the enemy. It is a plain case: if I punished any one for his good, I claim the privilege of parents with their children, masters with their scholars, and surgeons with their patients. In the time of storm the captain must be rough



with his men, for the least mistake is fatal. But this is all over now ; the calm has come. And since I strike nobody now, when by the favour of the gods I am in good spirits, and am no longer depressed with cold, hunger, and fatigue, and now that I have more wine to drink, you may see that it was at all events not through insolence that I struck any one before. If such things are to be brought up against me, I would ask in common fairness that some of you stand up on the other side and recall a few of the occasions on which I have helped you against the cold, or against the enemy, or when sick, or in distress."

These words produced the desired effect. Many individuals responded to the appeal, "so that," as Xenophon briefly tells us, "it was all right in the end,"—that is to say, that he was not merely acquitted, but stood higher than before in the estimation of the army.

The remaining history of the return of the ten thousand Greeks is a record of the successive triumphs of Xenophon's good sense, governing capacity, and persuasive oratory. And a very difficult task he appears to have had in keeping the army straight, now that it had got into the region of Greek colonies. When the pressure of the Persian cavalry and of hostile mountain tribes was removed, the Cyreian army constantly tended to lose its unity, and resolve itself into sections and individual atoms. Xenophon alone, as Mr Grote points out, possessed a power, not shared by the other generals, of working on the minds of the soldiers collectively, and of keeping up an *esprit de corps* among them. He owed this to his Athenian education. He always treated every assemblage of the soldiers as an agora, or formal meeting for debate.

He thus brought into play the art which he alone in the army appears to have possessed—the art of dealing with and influencing assembled multitudes. His speeches, considered in relation to their object and occasion, are models of oratory. Apparently straightforward and simple, and totally free from all flourishes of rhetoric, they yet are most artistically constructed, so as to say the most effective things in the most effective way. The report of them is so graphically given, that we seem to have the whole scene before our eyes, and to be made interested spectators of transactions that took place twenty-two hundred years before any of us was born. And it must be added that, in these transactions, we find Xenophon always using his powers of influence for good and worthy purposes—for the advantage of the army as a whole, rather than for any isolated objects of self-aggrandisement ; and for the prevention equally of base conduct, and of rash and calamitous enterprise.


The Cyreian Greeks, embarking in the ships which had been provided for them, sailed along the Black Sea to Sinope—a name rendered familiar to the present generation by the disastrous episode of the Russian war* which occurred there in 1853. At this flourishing Greek seaport, the seat of an ancient Milesian colony, they were hospitably received, and here the soldiers began to feel the absolute necessity of striking some blow which might fill their purses and save them from returning empty-handed to Greece. For the success of such a project they determined that they

* See Mr Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. i. p. 373.

must have a single commander-in-chief to lead them. Their thoughts at once turned towards Xenophon, and they unanimously deputed their captains to request him to accept the command. Xenophon was in some degree tempted by so flattering a proposal ; but, on the other hand, he reflected on the difficulties and precariousness of the position offered to him ; and being in doubt, he resolved, as usual, to lay the matter before the gods. "Jupiter the King," to whom he sacrificed, showed nothing but warning and dissuasive omens. So when the army was assembled, and Xenophon had been formally proposed for election as commander, he rose and deprecated such a step on the ground that it would be a slight to Sparta, as the leading state of Greece, if an Athenian should be chosen commander, when a Lacedæmonian general was present. Several speakers opposed this excuse as invalid. But when Xenophon plainly told them that the omens had been unfavourable to his accepting the chief command, they acquiesced, and chose for their chief Cheirisophus the Lacedæmonian, who had commanded the vanguard in the retreat from Persia.

The army now pursued its voyage over waters which were said to have of old borne the Argo, the symbolic precursor of Greek nautical enterprise. They soon arrived at Heraclea, which had been colonised from Megara, a city not far from Athens. Here they were hospitably received by the inhabitants, who sent them out presents of oxen, barley-meal, wine, and other things. The soldiers, however, being still in a discontented and greedy frame of mind, began

to debate whether they should continue their journey homewards by sea or by land ; and some proposed and actually carried the resolution that they should levy a tribute of £2300 or more upon the city that had received them so kindly. Both Cheirisophus and Xenophon absolutely refused to have anything to do with making such an unjust demand on a friendly Greek city. The soldiers thereupon sent three persons of their own nomination to convey their resolutions to the people of Heraclea. The demands and the threats of these envoys merely had the effect of causing the Heracleans to close their gates and put themselves in a state of defence. The army, thus baffled, broke out into fresh dissensions and insubordination. The Arcadians and Achæans, who made up above half the force, separated themselves from the rest and chose their own generals. And thus the chief command of Cheirisophus came to an end on the sixth or seventh day after he had been chosen. Some two thousand of the troops attached themselves to Xenophon, and the army was broken up into three divisions. Moving still to the west, these three divisions separately (one in ships and two by land) reached Calpe, a harbour in Bithynia, not far from the Bosphorus. Here each of the two other divisions got into trouble in marauding expeditions, and were severally rescued by the division under Xenophon. Here also Cheirisophus died of fever, and Xenophon became virtually, though not nominally, the commander-in-chief. And the soldiers passed a resolution that no one, under pain of death, should again propose to divide the army.



Xenophon evidently set eyes of affection upon the harbour of Calpe. He describes with enthusiasm its convenient situation under a lofty rock, its copious supply of water, the abundant timber in its neighbourhood, and the fertility of the surrounding country—producing, as he twice observes, “everything except olives,” which, as a Greek, he seems particularly to have missed. The belief that he wanted to colonise the place was very strong in the army, and the soldiers, as a protest, refused to encamp upon the very spot which Xenophon says “would have been the natural site for a city.” To explain this conduct of theirs, he mentions that the majority of Greeks in the army were not absolutely poor men, but (what we should call) gentlemen, who had joined the expedition from a regard to Cyrus, or under the idea that brilliant fortunes might be made in his service. Many of them had families at home, and they now wanted to get back.

The natives of the surrounding country had the same impression that a new city was to be formed, and after Xenophon had given them a little taste of Greek prowess, in a sharp skirmish with some Bithynian troops assisted by some cavalry belonging to the Persian satrap, they sent in proposals of alliance. Traders along the coast, also, willingly put in to secure the custom of the supposed settlers. And the omens for departure, whenever a sacrifice was made, were, or seemed to Xenophon, extremely unfavourable. The army thus rested many days at Calpe, whence they did a good deal of plundering.

And now a new character appeared on the scene. This was Cleander, the Lacedæmonian governor of Byzantium (now Constantinople), to whom communications had been sent, and who now came with two ships. The circumstances of his arrival were unfortunate, for the army was out on raid, and when they came back some of the men got embroiled with one of Cleander's followers. This man was really acting unjustly, by endeavouring to prevent part of the plunder from being conducted to the public store. In the dispute he was roughly treated by Agasias, a friend of Xenophon's, and was pelted with stones by some soldiers. This gave rise to what we should call "a grave complication;" for the powerful Cleander himself was frightened by the excited soldiery, and he threatened, when Xenophon had restored order, to sail away and to proclaim the Cyreian army enemies to Sparta, and interdicted from reception in any Grecian city. The effective eloquence and perfect tact of Xenophon were now in requisition; and by the use of these, on the one hand, he persuaded the soldiers to make absolute submission; and, on the other hand, he mollified Cleander, and induced him, not only to pass over what had occurred, but to accept the command of the army, for the purpose of conducting them back to Greece. Unfortunately, however, the omens were for three days unfavourable, and Cleander, though expressing the greatest friendship for the Cyreian force, declared that evidently the gods would not allow him to do more for them than to prepare for them a good reception at Byzantium when they should arrive there; and he

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accordingly sailed away. The army shortly afterwards started by land, and after a six days' march, having done a good stroke of looting on the way, they arrived at Chrysopolis, which answers to the modern Scutari, the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople, well known as the seat of our hospitals during the Crimean war.

The Cyreian soldiers were now on the threshold of their fatherland, but actual return seemed still as hard for them as it had been for the much-wandering Ulysses. The concluding pages of Xenophon's narrative represent them as bandied about by Persian satraps, Lacedæmonian officials, and Thracian chiefs, all equally unscrupulous in conduct. The interest of such details consists in the picture of the times which they give us. We see the total want of "solidarity" among the Greek states. Sparta, indeed, appears as all-powerful, but quite devoid of kindred feeling towards Greeks as Greeks. No welcome as to countrymen is extended to the Greek force who, with such unparalleled bravery and skill, had just cut their way out of the depths of the Persian empire. They are regarded with cold selfishness or suspicion as tools to be used, or an infliction to be dreaded. We see, then, that principle of self-seeking isolation at work in Greece which made her the prey of Macedonia, and afterwards of Rome. And those acquainted with India will be aware that it is the same principle which has split up a vast homogeneous population, and has given over to the rule of England an empire extending from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin.

While the Greeks were at Chrysopolis, Cleander

ceased to be the first man in Byzantium; for Anaxibius, the High Admiral of Sparta, happened to come there, and was, of course, superior to the local governor. The first intrigue against the Greek army was managed by Pharnabazus, the Persian satrap in their neighbourhood, who made interest with Anaxibius to remove them out of his country. Anaxibius, willing to gratify an Oriental magnate, made no scruple in inviting the Greeks over to Byzantium, under promise of pay for the troops. When he had got them there he gave them no pay, but simply ordered them to pack up and march home by the Chersonese. The soldiers were naturally excited at this treatment, and they were within an ace of sacking the town of Byzantium. Xenophon required all his oratory to dissuade them from such a step, which would have infallibly reduced them all to the position of hopeless outlaws. The attention of the army was now diverted by the offers of a Theban adventurer, who proposed to engage them for a filibustering expedition. As, however, it turned out that he was unable to provision them, the negotiations broke down, and the army took up its quarters in some Thracian villages, not far from Byzantium. A good many of the soldiers disbanded; some sold their arms to pay their passage home; others joined the people in the neighbouring towns.

Xenophon in the meanwhile had taken leave of the army, having induced Anaxibius to give him a passage home. They sailed together, but before they had got out of the Sea of Marmora they were met by one Aristarchus, who was on his way to replace Cleander as governor of

Byzantium, and who brought news that Anaxibius himself had been superseded. Anaxibius, wishing to do a last good turn to Pharnabazus, advised Aristarchus, when he had got to his government, to seize and *sell for slaves* as many of the Cyreian soldiers as he could lay hands on. Aristarchus, acting on this hint, appears actually to have sold four hundred of them whom he found in Byzantium—one of the most atrocious little acts in all history! And Anaxibius, being naturally anxious to get some reward for his zeal from Pharnabazus, sent to him; but the satrap, who had in the mean time learned that Anaxibius was no longer in power, promptly gave him the cold shoulder, and would have no communications with him.

The disappointed selfishness of Anaxibius now took a new direction, and he became as anxious to plant a thorn in the side of the Persian magnate as he had hitherto been to serve him. He called Xenophon, and “ordered” him by all means to sail back to the army, to keep it together and collect the scattered men, and bring over the force without delay into Asia. Xenophon does not tell us what were his own reflections upon this commission. Perhaps he could not have got home against the wishes of Anaxibius. Perhaps the feeling of old companionship with the army was strong upon him. He speaks as if he had at once accepted the task imposed upon him. In a ship, furnished by the ex-admiral, he crossed again to Thrace, and arrived among the army, by whom he was gladly welcomed. He got the men down to Perinthus, a port on the Sea of Marmora, and began to

collect ships for their conveyance. But Aristarchus, the new governor of Byzantium, acting, as Anaxibius had before done, in the interest of Pharnabazus, now interposed, and threatened "to drown any man who should be found on the sea." And while the harassed Greeks were thus again arrested in their movements, there came to them fresh overtures from Seuthes, a neighbouring chief of Thrace, who had before made several attempts to get the Cyreian contingent into his pay.

The omens of sacrifice appeared to Xenophon to favour the entertaining of these overtures. He therefore went to Seuthes, whom he found living in a guarded castle, and who told him that he required the troops for the recovery of his hereditary rights as prince of the Odrysians, of which rights he had been forcibly deprived, and driven to lead the life of a marauding chief. He offered pay of one stater (about £1, 2s. 6d.) per month for each soldier, with double for the captains, and four times as much for each general. He promised, in addition, lands, yokes of oxen, and a walled town to reside in. To Xenophon he offered his daughter and a town to himself. He further undertook never to lead the Greeks more than seven days' march from the sea.

Upon the faith of these promises the Greeks entered the service of Seuthes, and were entertained by him with a barbaric feast, at which some ludicrous incidents occurred; and after which a Thracian entered bringing a white horse, and, taking a horn full of wine, said, "I drink to you, O Seuthes! and present you

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with this horse, on which you will pursue your enemies." Another, in similar fashion, offered a young slave; another some vestments, and so on. When Xenophon saw that some complimentary offering was expected from himself, and as the wine-horn was presented to him for this very purpose, he stood up boldly, and, taking the horn, said, "I present you, O Seuthes, myself and my comrades, to be your faithful friends, and to recover your dominions for you." The pledge and offering were well received, and the feast ended merrily. After all had well drunk, and the Greeks were thinking of retiring to their lines for the night, Seuthes proposed that they should at once strike a blow. So, though it was the depth of winter, they started at midnight, and, having crossed a mountain covered with snow, they came down next day on villages which they plundered and burnt. The booty was sent away to be sold at Perinthus, to provide pay for the troops. Afterwards they marched into the country called the Delta of Thrace, above Byzantium. The Greeks had a good deal of fighting, and suffered severely from the frost, not being so warmly clad as the natives of the country. When the first month was up, presents were offered to the generals (Xenophon, however, declined to take anything); and twenty days', instead of a month's, pay, was given to the troops. This naturally caused discontent, and gave rise to a quarrel between Xenophon and Heraclides, the paymaster of Seuthes, who tried as much as possible to damage Xenophon with his master. He even endeavoured to get the other Greek generals to

say that they could lead the army just as well as Xenophon. But it is a remarkable proof of the confidence which Xenophon's conduct had gradually inspired, that Timasion and other generals who had before been jealous of him, now said that nothing would induce them to serve without him.

This testimony of his brother officers must have been particularly gratifying to Xenophon, for the men, who were less discerning, and whose minds were warped by anger at their pay being continually withheld, yielded to all sorts of suspicions against Xenophon, who, they thought, must have been privately enriched by Seuthes. His position in the army was therefore, for the time, particularly uncomfortable, and he seems to have felt it very much. The service of the Greeks with Seuthes continued for two months, during which time they took and plundered villages far and wide, even as far up as Salmydessus, a seaport on the Euxine; and, in short, they brought the whole country into subjection to Seuthes. By the addition of men from the conquered tribes to his army, he had by this time a force twice as numerous as the Greeks, whom he now only wished to get rid of without the necessity of paying them.

A change in Greek politics, at this juncture, afforded the Cyreians an escape from their difficulties. The Lacedæmonians had just declared war against the Persian satraps, Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus, and had sent their general, Thimbron, into Asia to commence military operations. They then became extremely anxious to avail themselves of the remnant of the ten

thousand Greeks, and, instead of forbidding, to urge them to cross over to Asia. Two Spartan envoys, Charminus and Polynicus, arrived at the Greek camp with a commission from Thimbron to offer the army the same pay as had been promised, though not paid, by Seuthes. These commissioners were hospitably received by Seuthes, who saw in them a means of ridding himself of the army which he had made his catspaw, and wanted no longer. In private audience, the envoys asked his opinion of Xenophon, and Seuthes replied, "He is not a bad fellow on the whole, but he is a *soldier's friend*, and that hurts his interests." Xenophon appears to have had great satisfaction in recording this little certificate to the disinterestedness of his conduct.

The soldiers on hearing the offers of Thimbron joyfully closed with them, but still complained bitterly of the way in which they had been cheated by Seuthes. Charminus, acknowledging the justice of their complaint, himself made a representation on the subject to the Thracian chief, but without effect. As a last appeal, he even sent Xenophon to demand the arrears of pay in the name of the Lacedæmonians. This "afforded the Athenian an opportunity of administering a severe lecture to Seuthes. But the latter was found less accessible than the Cyreian assembled soldiers to the workings of eloquence: nor did Xenophon obtain anything beyond a miserable dividend upon the sum due — together with civil expressions towards himself personally; an invitation to remain with a thousand men, instead of going to Asia with

the army ; and renewed promises, not likely now to find much credit, of a fort and a grant of lands."*

But the troubles of Xenophon were now over, and a run of good-luck for himself closes his account of the Expedition of Cyrus. He would have gone straight to Athens, but the soldiers, who were now on the best terms with him, begged him not to leave them till they should be handed over to Thimbron. They all crossed the sea of Marmora to Lampsacus, celebrated for its wine. Here Xenophon met an old acquaintance, one Euclides, a soothsayer, who asked him how much gold he had. Xenophon replied, that so far from having anything, he was just going to sell his horse to pay his travelling expenses. The soothsayer, on inspection of the victims, said that evidently Xenophon had spoken the truth, but "had he sufficiently propitiated Jupiter the Gracious?" Xenophon admitted that he had not sacrificed to this deity, whom he seemed to think it natural to regard as quite distinct from Jupiter the King, to whom he had made frequent offerings. He at once repaired the deficiency, and the very same day the Lacedæmonian paymasters, hearing that he had sold a favourite horse, repurchased it for him at the price of about £55.

Marching through the Troas, they arrived at Pergamus, famous for its library of 200,000 volumes, afterwards transferred to Alexandria ; for the invention of parchment (the name of which is derived from *Pergamena*) ; for its painting and architecture ; and for being the seat of one of the Seven Churches of Asia. Here

* Mr Grote's History of Greece, vol. ix. p. 234, 235.

Xenophon was hospitably entertained by a Greek lady, who told him of a prize awaiting him in the person of one Asidates, a wealthy Persian, who resided in the neighbourhood. Finding the omens favourable, Xenophon set out after supper, taking only a select party of his friends, in order not to have to divide the booty among too many. But the country-house of the Persian was strongly fortified, and resisted the night attack. And at daybreak various troops in the pay of the Great King came to the rescue, and it was as much as the Greeks could do to fight their way back to their lines, with some slaves and cattle enclosed in a hollow square. The next day the unfortunate Asidates attempted to move off with his family and his goods, but Xenophon came down upon him with the whole Cyreian force, and carried him off with all that he possessed. Xenophon now exultingly says that "he had no complaint against Jupiter the Gracious." For the army placed at his disposal the pick of the spoil, so that he was "now even in a position to serve a friend."

This is the last incident recorded in the 'Anabasis.' To some it has appeared as a blot upon the character of Xenophon, but it might be remembered first, that the Greeks were actually at war with the Persians at this time; secondly, that the international morality of the day gave a general sanction to acts of the kind, when "barbarians" and not Greeks were the victims.

Under the above circumstances the parting of Xenophon from the army whose perils and vicissitudes of fortune he had shared for exactly two years

(from March 401 B.C. to March 399 B.C.) must have been on both sides cordial and pleasant. The ten thousand Greeks had been reduced by casualties and dispersion to six thousand; and of this force Timbron, coming to Pergamus, took the command. The Cyreian contingent now lost its distinctive existence. It was merged in the army which, under Timbron, and afterwards under the far abler Dercylidas who superseded him, carried on a successful campaign against the Persian satraps, and secured for a time the independence of the Greek cities in Asia Minor. Doubtless many of the old comrades of Xenophon returned, like himself, enriched to their homes. And doubtless many a Greek fireside during many a winter time was enlivened by tales of the Expedition of Cyrus and the Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks.

Xenophon's return to Athens must have taken place within a few weeks of the death of his master Socrates. He appears to have diligently collected particulars of the accusation, trial, and death of the sage, and to have added them to his former notes of the conversations of Socrates. But it appears probable that he did not bring out his 'Recollections' till a later period of his own life, when he had settled down to literary pursuits. Within three years he had again quitted his home, and was serving under the Lacedæmonian king Agesilaus in the still protracted war against the Persians in Asia Minor. But now a fresh shuffle of the political cards in Greece took place; for the Athenians, together with the Thebans and others, formed an alliance with the King of Persia; and thus

Xenophon, by continuing to hold command under Agesilaus, was in the position of bearing arms against his country. He accompanied Agesilaus in his invasion of northern Greece, and was present with him at the bloody battle of Coroneia (B.C. 394), where the Athenians and their Theban allies were vanquished. For this he was treated as the enemy of his country, and a decree of banishment was passed against him.

The Lacedæmonians, however, did not fail to provide him with a home. They allotted him a residence at Scillus,* a village about two miles from Olympia, where the great games were held every fifth year. This circumstance alone must have made the situation agreeable to a man like Xenophon. It was as if a yeoman of sporting tendencies were to receive a present of a farm at Epsom. And the Olympic games were something more than equal to the "Derby;" for they implied a periodical meeting (under terms of truce if it was war-time) of all the great wits and intellects, and all the leading characters, both literary and political, from the different states of Greece. There was excellent hunting in the neighbourhood of Scillus;—not fox-hunting on horseback, but hunting of the boar and the antelope on foot with spears, and of the hare with dogs and nets. In this congenial spot Xenophon settled down, probably in the forty-second year of his age, after his few years' campaigning, to a life of literature and field-sports. "He spent his time henceforth," says his biographer, "in hunting, and

* The description of his residence at Scillus is given by Xenophon himself (*Anabasis*, v. 3).

feasting his friends, and writing his histories." And ere long he had in Scillus a charming souvenir of his adventures with the Cyreian army. To explain this it must be mentioned that when the Greek army reached the Euxine in their retreat, they sold the prisoners whom they had taken in various skirmishes by the way, and divided the proceeds. The tenth part of the money realised was set apart to be dedicated to Apollo and to Diana of Ephesus, and each general was intrusted with a portion of this sum to take charge of. It seems probable that Xenophon was forced, by the exigencies of the subsequent march, to spend the portion which had been intrusted to him. But when he returned to Athens, enriched with the ransom of Asidates, he caused an offering to Apollo to be made, and to be inscribed with his own name and that of his friend Proxenus, and this he sent to Delphi. Afterwards, when serving with Agesilaus in Asia, he replaced the amount which was due to the goddess Diana, and handed it over for safe keeping to Megabyzus, the warden of her temple at Ephesus. He stipulated that if he should fall in the campaign, Megabyzus was to devote the money to an offering in the Ephesian temple, but otherwise to restore it to him.

When Xenophon had taken up his abode at Scillus, Megabyzus came over on one occasion to see the Olympic games, and he brought with him the deposit and restored it. Xenophon invested the money in lands to be devoted in permanence to the goddess. Not only had Diana signified her approval of the site

by omens in sacrifice, but also there appeared to be a peculiar appropriateness in the domain selected. In the first place, it was an excellent hunting-ground, and therefore suitable for the divine huntress; and also, by a strange coincidence, there was a stream running through it called Selinus, which was also the name of a stream running close to the temple of Diana at Ephesus. "In both rivers," adds Xenophon—speaking somewhat after the manner of Fluellen—"there are fish and cockles." Here he caused a temple and altar to be raised, and a statue of the goddess in cypress wood to be set up—exact copies, though on a reduced scale, of the world-famous temple and altar and golden statue at Ephesus. And he appointed an annual festival to be held, which was attended by men and women of the surrounding country, who pitched tents on the sacred ground, and were "supplied by the goddess herself with barley-meal, bread, wine, sweetmeats, and a share of the victims offered from the sacred pastures, and of those caught in hunting; for the sons of Xenophon and of the other inhabitants always made a hunt against the festival, and such of the men as wished hunted with them; and there were caught, partly on the sacred lands and partly on Mount Pholoe, boars and antelopes and deer."

The picture presented to us by Xenophon of his life at Scillus is quite idyllic, and thoroughly Greek. A certain phase of religion predominates over the whole, but it is the bright, picturesque, and easy religion common among the Aryan races, which is so different from Semitic earnestness, and which consists in doing,



under the name of divine authority, what men would have been most inclined to do without it. Hunting for the glory of Diana, cultivating his farm, writing his books, and living in social intercourse with all comers,—these elements made up the existence of Xenophon at Scillus, during the best years of his long life.

“Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it”—

he lived in retirement from contemporary politics, and yet was always supplied with information as to their progress, of which he must have taken careful notes for his future history.

It is not quite certain whether he was permitted to end his days in this charming retreat. One account says, that after the defeat of his Lacedæmonian patrons at the battle of Leuctra, B.C. 371, he was forced to abandon it, and that he retired to Corinth. Another account declares that he was only subjected to a law-suit, but that he retained his lands, and died at Scillus. However this may be, Athens became reconciled to Sparta, and the sentence of banishment against Xenophon was revoked. His two sons, Gryllus and Diodorus, fought amongst the Athenian knights in the cavalry action which formed the prelude to the battle of Mantinea, B.C. 362; in which battle Gryllus was slain, after manifesting distinguished bravery. Xenophon must have been about sixty-nine years old at this time. They say that he was performing a sacrifice, with a garland on his head, which he took off when the news

was brought to him that "his son had fallen," but when the messenger added "nobly," he replaced it; and he would not weep, for he said, "I knew that my son was mortal." This is the last anecdote which is recorded of Xenophon "the wise." But he appears to have lived long afterwards, and to have attained his ninetieth year.

Time has been very lenient with the works of Xenophon. We possess all the books ascribed to him by Diogenes Laertius. They are as follows:—'Hellenica,' 'Anabasis,'* 'Cyropædeia,' 'Recollections of Socrates,' 'Apology of Socrates,' 'Agesilaus,' 'The Constitution of Athens,' 'The Constitution of Sparta,' 'Hiero,' 'The Banquet,' 'On the Athenian Revenues,' 'On Domestic Economy,' 'Hipparchicus,' 'On Horsemanship,' 'On Hunting.' A glance at this list will show

* It is curious that in the 'Hellenica' (iii. 1, 2) Xenophon says that "the history of the expedition of Cyrus, and of the return of the Greeks in safety to the sea, has been written by Themistogenes the Syracusan." This passage has given rise to two theories to account for the statement it contains. One is, that Themistogenes, as well as Xenophon, had written an account of the expedition of Cyrus—that the inferior work was eclipsed and forgotten, but that Xenophon, through modesty, mentioned *that* account instead of his own. The other theory is suggested by Plutarch, namely, that Xenophon, having a double interest in the 'Anabasis,' as author and as actor in the military events described, preferred his reputation in the latter capacity to the fame which he might get as an author; and, therefore, to gain full credence for the somewhat self-glorifying history, attributed it to another hand. The second theory seems the more probable. At all events, the ancients unanimously regarded the 'Anabasis' as the work of Xenophon, and not even German criticism has thrown any doubt on this belief.

what a wide and varied field is covered by the writings of Xenophon, and what a rich mine they constitute of information relative to events, great men, ideas, arts, and manners in Greece at the end of the fifth and through the first half of the fourth century B.C. In our present *aperçu* of Xenophon, it will be impossible for us to attempt to give the contents of the 'Hellenica,' which is a contemporary record of affairs in Greece from the year 411 to the year 362, B.C. To do so would be to epitomise Greek history, which is not the object of this little book. Readers wishing to follow out that part of the subject, can best do so by consulting Mr Grote's great work (vols. ix. and x.), or they will find a summary and criticism (perhaps rather too severe) of the 'Hellenica' of Xenophon in Colonel Mure's 'Critical History of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece,' vol. v. p. 265-323. The remaining works in the above list all more or less come within our scope, as bringing this ancient Greek writer and his times directly before us. In the 'Anabasis,' which we have already epitomised, we have a narrative from personal observation comparable in some respects to the 'Commentaries' of Cæsar, or Mr Kinglake's 'Invasion of the Crimea.' In the 'Cyropædeia' (or 'Education of Cyrus') we have the earliest specimen extant of a historical romance. In the 'Memorabilia' (or 'Recollections'), Xenophon plays the part of a Boswell, and gives us the actual conversations of his master Socrates. The 'Agesilaus' is the embodiment of the "hero-worship" of Xenophon for his admired patron the King of Sparta. The Constitutions of Athens

and Sparta are perhaps the oldest remaining specimens of the political tract or pamphlet. The 'Hiero' is a disquisition, in the form of dialogue, on the characteristics of despotic government. 'The Banquet' is a description, real or imaginary, of a "fast" supper-party at Athens, and of the conduct and discourse thereat of the wise and moral Socrates. 'The Revenues of Athens' contains some of Xenophon's ideas on finance and political economy. The 'Domestic Economy' treats, in two dialogues, of farm and household management. The 'Hipparchicus,' or 'Cavalry Officer's Manual,' contains suggestions by an experienced tactician for the improvement of the cavalry arm of the Athenian service. The 'Horsemanship' is a treatise on choosing, keeping, and sitting the horse. In the 'Hunting' Xenophon appears somewhat in the character of an Izaak Walton, and describes enthusiastically his favourite sport.

CHAPTER V.

THE 'RECOLLECTIONS OF SOCRATES.'

THE 'Memorabilia'—or, as the Greek name should rather have been translated, the 'Memoranda'—the 'Recollections,' or 'Notes from the Conversations,' of Socrates, ranks second by general repute among the works of Xenophon. But it is the interest of the name of Socrates, and the fact of its professing to be a genuine matter-of-fact record of what he said, that gives this book its importance. Xenophon had not in reality the qualifications of a Boswell. We have always a feeling, in reading the conversations which he records, that his notes could only have been accurate in a lower sense. The matter of the dialogue was given, or attempted to be given, but the delicacy of the form was lost. The words employed look like paraphrase reports of the substance of what Socrates said, or appeared to Xenophon to say, and they fail to bring the distinctive personality of the speaker before us. Plato, as most people are aware, wrote imaginary philosophical dialogues in which he constantly introduces Socrates. And it is to these imaginary and dramatic dialogues

that we must refer, to explain and complete the 'Recollections' of Xenophon. Those who know Plato can "read between the lines" of Xenophon, and see that much which the latter represents as bluntly said was in all probability accompanied by delicate intellectual turns, which the quick and impatient soldier's mind of Xenophon did not appreciate or think worth reproducing in detail. The ancients were agreed that nothing was more strikingly characteristic of Socrates than his "irony," which consisted in a sort of mock deference, always in good taste, to those whom he was going to instruct. Of the exact nature of this manner of his we should know nothing from Xenophon or any one else, were it not for the dramatic representation of it in Plato. Again, from Plato we learn to believe that Socrates was one of the finest "gentlemen" that ever lived; in the heat of argument not wounding the susceptibilities of any; answering insolence with superior repartee, but never triumphant or offensive; always entering into the feelings of others; and always conveying intellectual instruction under the forms of urbanity and good-breeding. The account of him in Xenophon is not inconsistent with this idea, but would never have fully suggested it. But the work of Xenophon has, after all, a certain value of its own. It gives a solid basis of facts, and prevents one from thinking that the Socrates of philosophy was a mere creation of the genius of Plato. We shall now take some of the most salient of those facts, and endeavour thus to put

before our readers one of the most strange and wonderful men that ever lived.


According to the descriptions both of Plato and of Xenophon, which are corroborated by antique gems, Socrates had a strong burly figure, prominent and crab-like eyes, a flat nose with broad open nostrils, a large and thick-lipped mouth, and a forehead indicative of great mental power. Everything about him conveyed the idea of force, character, and originality. His father had been a sculptor, and his mother a midwife. He was bred up to his father's profession, and followed it for a time with some success; and a statue which he executed of the Graces was preserved in the Acropolis of Athens. In time of war he served his country* as a heavy-armed soldier, and was in action, and distinguished himself, at the siege of Potidæa and at the battle of Delium. Xenophon omits to mention one peculiarity of Socrates which we learn from Plato—namely, his strange fits of protracted reverie, almost amounting to trance. But he is full of allusions to the Dæmon, or divine mentor, under whose guidance Socrates laid claim to act. The whole life of Socrates was represented by himself as being ordered under the direction of internal signs from the gods, which told him what to do and what not to do. He thoroughly

* The army system of Athens, like that of modern Prussia, required every citizen to be trained as a soldier, and to serve in time of need. The enrolment was between the ages of eighteen and fifty-eight. Socrates must have been about forty-six years old at the battle of Delium.

believed in the reality of these intimations, which perhaps all of us have at times, without recognising and obeying them. But Socrates by habit learnt more and more to recognise and obey. And thus his whole life took the form of a mission, which consisted in improving others, both in intellect and character, by his conversations.

Socrates was twice married, having first espoused Xanthippe, whose name has unfortunately become a byword in history for a shrew.* By her he had a

* Diogenes Laertius, Athensaus, and Plutarch, all state that Socrates was married twice. At the time of his death he had one grown-up son, Lamprocles, and two infants. The 'Memorabilia' mentions a conversation with Lamprocles, who complained of his mother's temper, while Socrates good-naturedly urged that it was of no consequence. But who was the mother of Lamprocles? Diogenes says that the two wives were Myrto (granddaughter of Aristides) and Xanthippe, but that it is doubtful which was the first wife. Evidently the first wife, the mother of Lamprocles, was the scold. Plato in the 'Phædo' definitely mentions Xanthippe as coming to the condemned cell of Socrates. This would make her the second wife. Equally definitely Xenophon, in the 'Banquet' (see below, p. 118), mentions Xanthippe as married to Socrates, and as famous for her bad temper, twenty years before. This would probably make her the first wife. Between these two authorities the issue must lie. On the whole, in a matter of the kind it seems more likely that Plato made a slip. Xanthippe's name was perhaps so familiar as being the wife of Socrates, that Plato forgot the second marriage with Myrto when introducing the wife in the death scene, at which he was not himself present. Poor Xanthippe's tongue had probably been "stopped with dust" ere that scene occurred. The attempts to "rehabilitate" her come to this, that Socrates could not have been a very comfortable husband.



son, and in all probability Xanthippe may have had many a word with him on the subject of his not going on with his profession, and making money to keep his family in comfort. But, by inheritance or otherwise, he had some very small means, and instead of increasing these to meet the desires of ordinary people, he determined to cut down his wants to what he had, and thus he voluntarily adopted a life of austere simplicity and poverty, entirely devoted to what he considered his spiritual calling. India of the present day throws light on many of the features of ancient Greek society, and in India such lives of renunciation and of contented poverty are not unfrequent. Often in the Indian bazaars may you see Socrates, or something like him, in the person of some stout Brahman, good-humouredly lounging about in loose robes and with bare legs, ready to discuss for hours, with all comers, any topic that may turn up, but for preference some point of Vedanta philosophy. The resemblance is doubtless an external one, yet still there is the same simple notion of life, contented with the barest necessities, and cheered by the play of the intellect in talk.

But the talk of Socrates was not idle—it was always directed to a definite purpose. Every conversation was meant to produce a result, and to leave the person who had talked with Socrates in a better condition than before—either with truer views as to the conduct of life, or disabused of some fallacy, or stimulated to inquire about some point in a deeper way and after a sounder method. For such talk he laid himself out.

and made it his daily business. In the morning he regularly frequented the gymnasia and exercise-grounds; at noon, when the market was full, he was to be found there; for the rest of the day he went wherever the citizens of Athens happened most to be congregated. Socrates thus became "an institution" and a public character; and as such he was caricatured by Aristophanes in a comedy called 'The Clouds,' in which Socrates was represented, miserable and half-starved, keeping a "thinking shop," in which the most absurd speculations were ventilated. This public raillery probably did Socrates no harm, and was not the least resented by him.

But in the unremitting pursuance of his missionary career for the improvement of his fellow-citizens, Socrates made himself many enemies. There are always people who do not wish to be improved, especially after they have got to a certain age, and who resent the attempt to improve them as an impertinence. Again, with all the grace and good-breeding of the manner of Socrates, it was his invariable object to show people that they did not know so much about things as they themselves imagined. And this operation was applied in the most unsparing way to persons who were considered to be quite "authorities" on political and other questions. We can hardly wonder that such a species of practice should have raised up for the practitioner a plentiful crop of unpopularity. Public men found themselves assailed, before crowds of people, with vexing questions which they were unable to answer. They found their *prestige* impaired,

and their minds thrown for the first time into an attitude of self-mistrust. They must in many instances have hated the very sight of Socrates, but there was no escaping him, for he had nothing else to do but always to be in market and forum, and all public places, ready to annoy. The young entertained a different feeling about him. Socrates had a great love for the society of youth, especially of the clever and promising. They afforded him the most hopeful materials to work upon; their minds were plastic, their prejudices less inveterate, their ardour uncooled, and their curiosity undulled by time and custom. Socrates constantly drew around him a band of such young men, over whom, by his versatile originality and many-sided talk, he exercised a great fascination. These constituted the Socratic school, which, by following out the suggestions of their master into various directions, created or commenced all that was best and most valuable in ancient philosophy. Among these, the most eminent were Euclid (not the geometrician) of Megara; Antisthenes, founder of the Cynics; Aristippus of Cyrene; and the lovely-minded Plato. Xenophon, probably when about eighteen years old, became one of the disciples of Socrates, but the bent of his mind was entirely practical, and he contributed nothing to the development of philosophy, and wrote no philosophical book, properly so called. Many other youths of the Socratic following took afterwards to political life, for which the training they had received in reasoning and discussion formed a useful preparation. Some turned out badly enough, and it was

made a reproach to Socrates that Alcibiades, who betrayed his country, and Critias, who, as one of the Thirty Tyrants, became her cruel oppressor, had been among his pupils.

The very influence which Socrates exercised over young men became a cause of his being held in suspicion and dislike by the *pères de famille* of Athens. He was thought to fill the mind of youth with new-fangled ideas, and to teach boys to lose respect for their own fathers, substituting a preposterous independence of spirit for the obedience natural to their age. In the year 399 B.C., when Socrates had for at least thirty years pursued his mission, and when he was more than seventy years of age, the feeling of unpopularity which he had excited found its culmination, owing apparently to the circumstance that he had endeavoured to prevent the son of one Anytus, a rich tradesman and powerful demagogue, from following his father's trade as a leather-seller. The boy appears to have been full of promise, and Socrates wished him to choose a more intellectual career. Anytus, however, was incensed, and took counsel on the matter with others who bore a grudge against Socrates, and among them with Melétus a poet, and Lycon a rhetorician. Poets and rhetoricians were both among the classes of people whose claims to knowledge of the truth Socrates had constantly impugned, and the two persons above named had probably each suffered under his public refutations. The result of their conference was, that one day there appeared, in regular form, posted up at the office of the King-Archon, one of the chief

civil magistrates at Athens, an indictment signed with the names of Melétus, Anytus, and Lycon, in the following terms :—"Socrates is guilty of crime, first, in not believing in the gods that the city believes in ; secondly, in introducing other new gods ; thirdly, in corrupting the youth. The penalty due is—death."

The appearance of this indictment, and the appointment of a day for it to be tried, must have caused a great sensation at Athens. But Socrates himself remained apparently unconcerned, talking of all other subjects except his approaching trial ; and one of his friends (who afterwards told the story to Xenophon) asked him if he had prepared his defence. To this he replied that his whole previous life had been a preparation, having been spent in studying what was right, and endeavouring to do it. He added that it *had* occurred to him to think what he should say before his judges, but that he had received the divine intimation to forbear. "Possibly the gods thought it better for him to die now than to continue to live, and no wonder, for hitherto he had lived most happily with a consciousness to himself of progressive moral improvement, and with the esteem and love of his friends. Were he to live on now, he might find his faculties impaired, and then the dignity and pleasure of his life would be gone. Were he to be put to death by his judges, he was confident that by posterity he would be regarded as one who had suffered wrongfully, but had done no wrong to others, having only endeavoured to make all men better."

Socrates was tried before a *dicastery*, or jury, con-

sisting of the large number of 557 Athenian citizens. Melétus appears to have stated the case for the prosecution, and it was left to Socrates to defend himself. In a trial of the kind, and before such a tribunal, the issue was sure to turn on the *animus*, favourable or otherwise, created by the speeches of the different parties on the minds of the jurymen. They were doubtless all practised in the discharge of their function, which in litigious Athens every one was constantly called on to fulfil. On such occasions they were accustomed to be conciliated by those who pleaded before them, and they would expect as a matter of course to be conciliated by Socrates. But Socrates condescended to nothing of the kind. His 'Apology' or 'Defence' has been reported both by Xenophon and Plato. The latter, as usual, puts into the mouth of his master a speech in more beautiful style and in sublimer strain than that which he really uttered. Xenophon merely gives rough heads of the topics which, he had heard, were used. But the general purport of both accounts is the same. Socrates, without addressing himself to the task of persuading his judges and saving his own life, spoke, as Mr Grote* well says, "for posterity." Instead of submitting explanations of his own conduct, he treated it as something of which he could only speak with a just pride. He gave indeed a distinct denial to the charge that he had shown any want of orthodoxy toward the national religion, as he could call all to witness that he had always joined in the public sacrifices. But with regard to the second count

* History of Greece, vol. viii. p. 654.

—that he had introduced new gods—he denied that his belief in the divine signal was anything different in kind from the belief that other men had in omens and auguries. He asserted emphatically as a fact the divine communications which he had received, and said that his friends had often benefited by the predictions which he had been able to make to them. And this statement created an unfavourable impression on the jury, for some disbelieved him, and others were offended at his claim to a special inspiration.

Turning now to the third count, that he had corrupted young men, he gave a history of his mode of life, the turning-point of which had been that the oracle of Apollo at Delphi had pronounced him the wisest of men. This avowal caused a fresh expression of disapprobation from the jury ; but, according to the account of Plato, Socrates softened the seeming arrogance of the boast, by adding that he himself had wondered why the god should have pronounced him wise, when he was conscious of knowing nothing. He had resolved to test the truth of the oracle by comparing himself with others. Hence he began to question those who had a high reputation, but their answers did not satisfy him. He tried men of all sorts, but invariably found that they had the show of knowledge without the reality. Thus he came to the conclusion that the god called him wisest, because, though knowing no more than other men, he alone was conscious to himself of his own ignorance. Henceforth he considered it his mission to lead other men to know themselves ; and as to the youth whom he had gratuitously

instructed, so far from corrupting them, he had invariably drawn them on to modesty, manliness, and virtue. "Ay," interrupted Melétus, "but I have known some whom you persuaded to obey you rather than their parents." "Yes," said Socrates, "about matters of education, for they knew I had specially studied this subject. About health people obey the physician, and not their parents; and in state affairs or war, you choose those who are skilled to be your leaders. Why then, in the most important thing of all, education, should not I be allowed to be an authority, if I am really such? or why should my claiming this be made a ground for thinking me worthy of death?"

From these specimens of the defence of Socrates, any one can see in what a lofty spirit of conscious rectitude it was conceived. On such of the jury as had petty minds, perhaps already full of prejudice against the defendant, and looking at all events to see him humble himself before them, his independent words were sure to fall unfavourably; and yet there was sufficient generosity among the *dicasts* to make the majority against him a small one. As many as 276 of their number were for acquitting him, while 281 voted that he was guilty of the charges brought against him. Even at this point he might have been saved, for the sentence was not yet passed, and, according to Athenian custom, the condemned person had the privilege of proposing some punishment, in which he would acquiesce, milder than that proposed by the prosecutor. But, as we learn from Plato, Socrates would not even now show any submission to the majority who had condemned

him. He said, proudly, that "what he was conscious of having merited was, to be maintained at the public expense as a benefactor to the State; at the solicitation of his friends, however, he would name as a counter-penalty, instead of death, a fine of thirty minæ (£120), which his friends were ready to pay for him." This proposition, or the manner in which it was made, sealed the doom which he had apparently hardly desired to escape. The jury now, by a separate vote, of which we do not know the numbers, sentenced him to suffer death.

For the glowing details of the last days and conversations of Socrates, given truly to the idea if not to the actual fact, we must refer our readers to the 'Phædo' of Plato. Xenophon shortly summarises the matter, saying that "by universal acknowledgment no man ever endured death with greater glory than Socrates. He was obliged to live thirty days after his sentence, for the Delian festival happened to be going on at the time, and the law allowed no one to suffer capital punishment until the sacred deputation which was sent on these occasions to the Isle of Delos should have returned. During that time Socrates was seen by all his friends, living in no other way than at any preceding period, with the same cheerfulness and tranquillity for which he had always been remarkable. What death could have been more noble or more happy than this?"

In many respects the end of Socrates may indeed be regarded as a *euthanasia*. There was nothing like the shame of a public execution, or the horror of a

violent death, to be endured. In privacy, amid a circle of friends and admirers, the cup of hemlock was to be drunk which would painlessly extinguish the vital powers, and that too at a period of life when of themselves they might soon have ceased. Such were the mitigating external circumstances; while inwardly there was "the royal heart of innocence," the high enthusiasm which has enabled so many to meet with cheerfulness a martyr's death, and the philosophic reason which entirely triumphed over the animal instincts, which saw things as a whole, and which counted the loss a gain. When Apollodorus, one of his disciples, said, "I grieve most for this, Socrates, that I see you about to die undeservedly." He answered, stroking the head of his pupil with a smile, "My dearest Apollodorus, would you rather see me die deservedly?" When some of his friends suggested a plan for his escape, at which the Athenians would probably have connived, he said, "I am willing to fly if you can tell me of any country to fly to where death does not await me." Seeing Anytus pass by, he remarked, "This man is elated as if he had done something great and noble in causing my death, because, when I saw him occupying the highest offices in the state, I said that he ought not to bring up his son among the ox-hides. How foolish he is not to know that whichever of us has done what is best and noblest for all time, he is the superior." When his friends asked what he wished done with his body, he said, "You may do with it what you like, provided you do not imagine it to be me."

To modern ideas there may seem to be something wanting in this picture; we might have preferred to see the strong light relieved by shadow, by some touch of nature at the thought of parting from family and friends, by some human misgivings on the threshold of the unknown. But the ancients must be judged by their own standards. The Greek ideal was one of strength, and widely different from the later and deeper Christian ideal of strength made perfect in weakness. Socrates was the noblest of the Greeks, and in almost all respects his life is worthy to be made an example to all time.

Xenophon does not regard the death of his master (so dignified and happy) as in itself a subject of pity and regret. Nor does he even express any strong indignation against the authors of it; he merely expresses wonder that the Athenians could have found Socrates guilty of the charges brought against him. And the ostensible object of his 'Recollections' is to show by an array of facts that Socrates was neither unorthodox, nor impious, nor a corruptor of youth. Xenophon's book looks like an argument addressed to the Athenian people, and it is certainly quite popular and practical in its object and point of view. Hence, while recording the conversations of that philosopher whose conversations introduced a new form and method into philosophy, Xenophon seems to leave the form and method of what was said out of consideration, and to restrict himself to quoting the matter, in order to show that the thoughts were those of a morally good man. Such an undertaking in reference

to Socrates was poor and limited ; it tells us about Socrates as a man, but obliges us to seek Socrates the philosopher in the imaginative pages of Plato. And the worst is that we are left in doubt—a doubt which can never be removed—how far, in representing the philosophical tenets of Socrates, Plato has attributed to him too much, and Xenophon too little. In bringing Xenophon's 'Memorabilia' to the knowledge of English readers, we must leave philosophical formulæ out of the question, and give shortly such of the recorded sayings as may seem most interesting.

Socrates, it appears, made a point of not departing from conformity with the usual religious ceremonies of his country. He also encouraged others in the use of divination, while he himself relied on the intimations of his dæmon or familiar spirit. He appears to have divided the affairs of life into two classes, one falling under the domain of art and science, about which men might be perfectly certain by the use of their own reason, and on which therefore it would be absurd to consult the gods. The other class consisted of things uncertain in their issue—as, for instance, whether it would be of advantage to make a particular marriage ; and on such subjects he advised that the gods should be consulted by means of augury.

He disapproved, according to Xenophon, of the speculations, so common among philosophers, into the nature and origin of the universe. He thought that such inquiries could lead to no certainty, and produced no result. He considered "the proper study of mankind" to be "man." And he professed to limit him-

self to discoursing on human affairs, considering what was just, what unjust ; what was sanity, what insanity ; what was courage, what cowardice ; what was a state ; wherein consisted the character of the true statesman ; how men were to be governed ; and the like.

With regard to prayer, he made a point of not asking for definite things, not knowing whether they would be good for him. But he prayed the gods to give him what it would be best for him to have, which they alone could know. Owing to his poverty, his sacrifices were small ; but he believed that, if offered in a pious spirit, they would be equally accepted by the gods. And he used to say that it was a good maxim, with regard to friends, and guests, and all the relations of life, "perform according to your ability."

When Athens was under the Thirty Tyrants, Critias, an old pupil of Socrates, was one of them. By cruel proscriptions they had put many of the citizens to death, on which Socrates compared them to "herdsmen who, being intrusted with cattle, reduced instead of augmenting the number of their herd." The remark was repeated to Critias, who, being stung by it, and also bearing a grudge against his former master for certain rebukes that he remembered, passed a law that "no one should teach the art of disputation," and sending for Socrates, he required his attention to it. Socrates, on hearing him, put on his usual humble demeanour, and asked to be informed the exact purport of the prohibition—"Was the art of reasoning considered to be an auxiliary to right or to wrong?" On this one of the Tyrants got angry, and said, "In order

to prevent all doubt, Socrates, we require you not to discourse with the young at all." Socrates, nothing daunted, asked to be informed more accurately what they meant by "the young." Up to what age was he to consider a man "young"? They said, "up to thirty." He then asked for a definition of "discourse." Might he not inquire the price of a thing, or any person's residence, from a man under thirty? "Yes," said Critias, "but you must now abstain from talking about those shoemakers, carpenters, and smiths that you used to have always in your mouth." "What!" said Socrates, "must I give up speaking of justice and piety and other subjects, to illustrate which I am in the habit of referring to those trades?" "Ay, by Jupiter! you must," said another of the Thirty; "and you must stop speaking of herdsmen too, else you may chance yourself to make the cattle fewer." This conversation shows the coolness of Socrates under the "reign of terror" at Athens.* It shows, too, his unpopularity, and how utterly alienated from him a former pupil had become.

Perhaps the most often quoted conversation of Socrates is that which he held with a young man named Aristodemus, who affected to despise religious observance. Having obtained from him the admission that he revered the genius of creative artists, Socrates asked him how he could avoid reverencing the intelligent design so copiously exhibited in the framework of man—in the adaptation of the organs to the different

* Xenophon tells us in another place that Socrates did not pay the slightest attention to the order of the Tyrants.

objects of sense—in the admirable defence provided by means of the eyelids and eyelashes for the eye—in the arrangement of the incisor and molar teeth—in the maternal instinct, and all the instincts of self-preservation which keep our species from destruction. He asked if all this, as well as all the orderly mechanism of the heavens, could be the work of chance? Aristodemus replied that he could not *see* any directors of the universe. To which Socrates retorted, “Why, you cannot see your own soul, the director of your body, and you might as well say that all your own actions are the result of chance.” Aristodemus now shifted his ground, and said, “I do not ignore the divine power, but I think it too grand to need my worship.” “The grander it is,” said Socrates, “surely the more it should be honoured by you, if it condescends to take care of you.” Aristodemus said that the difficulty with him was to believe that the gods took any thought for men. On which Socrates, to prove the divine Providence, pointed out the highly-favoured position occupied by man among the animals—the privileges of reason; the warnings sent to nations and individuals by omens and auguries; and the analogy between the mind ruling over and directing the body, and the universal intelligence which must be conceived as pervading all things and directing their movements. In fine, he recommended Aristodemus to make practical trial of the habit of worship, and of consulting the gods by divination.

Such was the natural theology of Socrates, as recorded by Xenophon. In it we find the argument

from final causes, just as it is used by Paley; and an analogical representation of God as bearing the same relation to the world which the individual soul does to the body. And the conclusion of the whole matter is made to be a recommendation to practical piety.

Xenophon says that "it is due to Socrates not to omit the conversation which he had with Antiphon," a Sophist or professional lecturer of the day. This man had taunted Socrates on his bare feet and scant clothing—the same in winter as in summer,—on his spare diet, and on the general wretchedness of his mode of life. "If Philosophy," he proceeded, "be your mistress, you get from her a worse maintenance than any slave would put up with from his master. It is all because you will not take money—money that cheers the recipient, and enables him to live in a more pleasant and gentlemanlike way. You really set your pupils a bad example in this; you are teaching them to live as miserably as yourself, and you are acting as if your instructions had no value, else why should you give them for nothing?" To this Socrates replied, that doubtless Antiphon would not relish his mode of life, but that for himself it had the charm of independence; that, as he was paid by no one, he owed no service to any; that his plain diet gave him as much pleasure as their luxuries gave to others; that he was, in bodily condition, always ready for anything; that above all he had the happy consciousness of always growing better himself, and of seeing friends about him who were constantly improved in their moral natures; that to want nothing was to be like

the gods, and that his aim was, in this point, to make some approach to the divine perfection. With regard to taking money for his instructions, he said that there were two things, either of which to sell was prostitution—namely, personal beauty and wisdom. “Those who sell their wisdom for money to any that will buy, men call ‘Sophists,’ or, as it were, a sort of male *demi-monde*; whereas whoso, by imparting knowledge to another whom he sees well qualified to learn, binds that other to himself as a friend, does what is befitting to a good citizen and a gentleman. Some men,” continued Socrates, “have a fancy for a fine horse, or a dog, or a bird; what I fancy and take delight in is friends of a superior kind. If I know anything, I teach it to them; I send them to any one by whom I think they may be improved. In common with them, I turn over and explore the treasures of the wise men of old which have been left written in books, and if we find anything good we pick it out, and we think it a great gain if we can be beneficial to one another.” This pleasing picture of the Socratic circle of friends may be taken as a set-off against what has been said above of the annoying character of the sage’s public disputations. Xenophon tells us that when Socrates found any man really wishing to learn, he desisted from vexing him with difficulties, and did his best to assist his inquiries. We may note also the severe retort upon the taunts of Antiphon, in the way in which the Sophists are, as if incidentally, characterised.

Some of the conversations of Socrates, as they are related in the ‘*Memorabilia*,’ appear less calculated to

be successful in producing the impression they aimed at. With regard to some of these, it is impossible to help suspecting that they have been eked out by Xenophon, and spoilt in the process. A notable instance of this kind occurs in a long conversation between Socrates and his associate Aristippus, afterwards the famous leader of the school of pleasure. Socrates observing in this young man a too great tendency to self-indulgence, set himself to counteract this tendency, and he did so by establishing the incompatibility of a soft and self-indulgent life with the career of a statesman and the government of others. Aristippus replied that he had not the faintest desire to govern any. Socrates then asked, whether it was happiest to be governed or to govern? Aristippus said that he meant to avoid both the one and the other; and that, in order to prevent being placed in either position, he proposed to himself to be a cosmopolite, and to travel about from state to state. Now on this announcement of the views of Aristippus we can have no doubt that the Socrates of Plato would have made an effective attack, in some way or other, by wit and raillery—perhaps by drawing a ridiculous picture of the cosmopolite mode of life. But the Socrates of Xenophon does nothing of the kind. He maintains a rather pedantic earnestness, and lectures away on the superior happiness of higher aims. He quotes Hesiod and Epicharmus to prove that virtue and exertion are good things, and finally gives at full length the allegory of Prodicus, known as “the choice of Hercules.” Hercules, when a young

man, met two females at a cross road—one called Vice, meretricious in dress and form ; the other called Virtue, beautiful, dignified, and noble. Each made offers and promises to induce him to accompany her. These offers and promises were the descriptions, from a moral point of view, of a virtuous and vicious life respectively. Such was the sermon, borrowed from one of the Sophists, which Xenophon represents Socrates as having preached on this occasion. Nothing could have been less qualified to produce an impression on a man of the world like Aristippus. And we may be sure, if the real Socrates was at all like what Plato has led us to imagine him, that he never spoke exactly as here represented. Several dialogues, occupying the middle part of the ‘*Memorabilia*,’ are of the same “goody” character, and entirely devoid of the racy cleverness and biting wit which Socrates was in the habit of using. Colonel Mure indeed suspects that Xenophon has “made his master the mouthpiece for his own conceptions.” At all events, if he has given us actual recollections or traditions of Socrates, he has served up many of them in such a way as to deprive them entirely of the Socratic flavour. There would be no interest in dwelling over such discourses as that in which the Xenophontic philosopher recommends two brothers to be good friends with each other ; or those in which he dilates on the advantages and duties of friendship. Such matter as this is moral and well-intentioned enough, but it would not have required the “*dæmon*” of Socrates, or his own demon-like ability, to reveal it to the world.

Another set of anecdotes has a faintly superior interest, in which Socrates is represented as advising his friends in their practical difficulties. One of them is in straits because his lands have been occupied by the enemy, and he can get no revenue from them, while he has a large household of slaves to support. Socrates advises him to make the slaves weave clothes for sale; and the experiment is successful. A second friend is reduced to beggary by war, and Socrates recommends him to become some rich man's steward. A third has plenty of means at his disposal, but is troubled by the so-called *sycophants*, or informers, bringing vexatious suits in order to extort money from him. Socrates tells him to retain the services of a clever poor man, who acts as his solicitor, and defeats the sycophants with their own weapons. We speak of a faint interest attaching to these stories; and it consists merely in this, that they exhibit Socrates as constituting himself adviser-general to his friends in matters of all descriptions.

One group of dialogues in the 'Memorabilia' is concerned with political or military topics. Socrates is represented in these as giving advice to young aspirants for offices of command in the state or the army. In some of these we observe a suspicious affinity to certain favourite speculations of Xenophon's on the improvement of cavalry, and on measures to be taken for the revival of the Athenian power. In others we find vague platitudes inflicted on the listener, such as that "it is the duty of a general to render those under him happy." In one there is a

glaring piece of sophistry—so glaring, and so opposed to the ordinary doctrines of Socrates, that it is worth quotation. There is no rule which the sage is oftener represented as enforcing in all forms, than that no man should undertake to perform or superintend any business of which he has not competent special knowledge. This maxim was entirely of a piece with what we know from elsewhere of the Socratic doctrine, that virtue itself is knowledge, and life an art. Now, in the fourth chapter of the third book of the ‘*Memorabilia*,’ one Nichomachides is represented as coming disgusted from the election of office-bearers, and complaining to Socrates that the Athenians were capricious as ever—that after long military service, with credit, in all the lower grades of command, and after receiving many wounds in action, his claims had now been set aside, and another man, who had hardly seen any service, and who knew nothing except how to make money, had been chosen general. Socrates, however, did not give the least sympathy to the complainant. He took the opposite side, and declared that he who is a good man of business has capacities for managing anything, whether it be a family, a city, or an army. In vain did Nichomachides argue that when it came to fighting, the good man of business might find himself at a loss. “Not at all,” said Socrates; “he will see exactly what is to be aimed at, and take the proper means accordingly.” The paradox here is so great that we can hardly help believing that the conversation actually took place, though Xenophon is not subtle enough to point out, or perhaps to see, its bearing. On the one

hand, we observe Socrates giving way to the love of contradiction, which is apt to be engendered in those who are accustomed to be looked up to. It is like Dr Johnson "sitting upon" one of his admirers. Again, Nichomachides may have been a very stupid man, and really unfit for command, which would give a justification to the line taken against him. Still further, it may be said that it was part of the Socratic method, as revealed by Plato, though not by Xenophon, to see different sides to every truth. In one sense it is true that special experience is required for every department; but it is also true that general ability is available in whatever sphere it be applied.

Socrates was not always allowed to take the aggressive side in discussion. He was sometimes cross-questioned after his own fashion, and put upon his mettle. Aristippus, who had very little reverence in his composition, is reported to have attacked him with the inquiry, "whether he knew anything good?" in order that, if he mentioned anything usually considered good, such as health, strength, &c., Aristippus might refute him by proving that it was sometimes an evil. But Socrates parried the question, asking in return, "Good for what? Do you mean good for a fever?" "No," said Aristippus, "I do not." "Good for sore eyes?" "No." "Good for hunger?" "No, not that." "Well, then," said Socrates, "if you mean to ask me whether I know anything good which is not good for anything in particular, I neither know such, nor do I wish to know it." The tables are thus cleverly turned, and Socrates obtains a

dialectical victory by silencing his opponent. In doing so, he commits himself to the position that "good" is a relative idea, and that he has no conception of any absolute good. An antagonist worthy to encounter him would have followed him up into this position, and would have asked, "If goods are manifold and relative, how do you account for their common name?" And to this Socrates would have had to give an answer which would have revealed to us his exact opinion on the nature of universal terms.

Aristippus, however, relinquishing this point, took up another, and asked Socrates "if he knew anything beautiful?" He replied, "Yes, many things." On which it was asked "whether these were all alike?" and Socrates said, "On the contrary, very unlike." "Then how can they be all beautiful?" To this Socrates replied by giving a theory of the Beautiful, which identified it with the relative good, or, in other words, the Useful. "What!" said Aristippus, "can a dung-basket be beautiful?" "Of course it can," said Socrates; "and a golden shield can be very ugly, if the one be well fitted for its proper use, and the other not." Pursuing this theme, he applied his doctrine to beauty in architecture, asserting that it simply consisted in the adaptation of buildings to the use for which they were intended. Thus he said that paintings and frescoes on the walls of houses often detracted from the comfort, and therefore from the beauty, of those houses, by necessitating the building of the walls in a particular way, by which the sun was too much excluded. We have here the first statement,

crudely made, of that relative theory of beauty which was adopted in modern times by Alison, Jeffrey, and others. We cannot tell how far it embodied the real opinion of Socrates, because when great men discuss things with their pupils, we cannot be sure how far they open their whole mind. And we know it to have been the object of Socrates rather to awaken inquiry than to give results. That his hints took root and germinated in the minds of others, we may see abundantly from the luxuriant and varied thought of Plato.

Other theories of Socrates given in the 'Memorabilia' might seem to require qualification. As, for instance, that Temperance and all the other virtues are identical with Wisdom. This ignores all distinction between the intellect and the will of man, and is opposed to acknowledged facts. In arguing with Hippias, who, like Aristippus, tried to confute him with questions, Socrates laid it down that Justice consists in obeying the laws. This position, by itself, would hardly be maintained, for it would amount to what in modern times has been called "Hobbism," which makes the legislator a creator of right and wrong. But Socrates modifies the theory by saying that in addition to the laws of the state there are "unwritten laws" which are in force among all mankind, or which, if not recognised, bring their own punishment. As an instance he mentions the rule that parents must not marry their children, for which he gives the apparently insufficient sanction that such marriages would imply a too great disparity of age. Another instance of an

unwritten law here given is, that "men must do good to those who have done good to them." In the doctrine that justice consists in obeying the laws, Socrates doubtless had an important meaning in view—namely, he wished to protest against the too great individualism of his times, and to assert that the first duty of man is to consider himself as a social being, bound up with his fellow-men in a great organism, of which the laws of his country are the expression. But to follow out such questions, and to attempt to fix more definitely the position of Socrates in the history of philosophy, would be beyond the scope of this chapter, and indeed it would be undertaking more than the whole 'Memorabilia' of Xenophon would furnish data for.

We have already given the chief features of that book. It is not necessary to go minutely into the conversations of Socrates with Parrhasius the painter, and Clito the sculptor. The teacher seems to have been a little carried away by the lust of giving advice, when he lectured these artists on choosing beautiful subjects, and on making their figures express the emotions of the mind. In talking with a corslet-maker, he appears to have aimed at getting a logical definition of what was meant by a corslet "fitting well." The story of his visit to Theodota, a beautiful courtesan, is perhaps best told of all the tales in the 'Memorabilia,' and if we make certain allowances for the manners and ideas of the age, it gives most idea of the Socratic grace and versatile politeness. Socrates evidently tried to draw on this lady, in the course of talk, to some degree of moral elevation, but she did not understand

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him, so he gradually and gracefully backed out of the interview. Socrates was of far too catholic a spirit to consider any class or phase of society excluded from the scope of his mission. But he was not a man to throw pearls before swine; he adapted himself to the atmosphere in which he found himself, but always endeavoured indirectly to purify and improve it, and if much could not be done in this way, to do a little.

A somewhat fuller picture of Socrates discharging this last-named function is given by Xenophon in the 'Banquet,' an imaginary dialogue,* which represents the philosopher at a gay Athenian supper-party. The incidents related are as follows:—A beautiful youth, named Autolycus, had gained the victory in the pancratium, or contest of wrestling and boxing at the public games. Callias, a wealthy Athenian, a friend of the boy's father, and having a great regard for him-

* We call this dialogue imaginary, from internal evidence. The event which was supposed to have given rise to the supper took place B.C. 420. Antisthenes would have been a very young man in 420, but he is represented in the dialogue as a man of mature opinions and decided cynical mode of life. Socrates, also, is described as quite an old man. Thus chronology is confused. The introduction, which is abrupt, speaks of "occurrences at which I was present." But Xenophon, when intending to mention himself, always does so in the third person—"Xenophon did this or that." He would have been about 11 years old in 420 B.C. On the whole, the 'Banquet' must be taken as a fancy sketch, based on something which really occurred. It was perhaps the first attempt at a dramatic picture, with Socrates for chief figure, and may have suggested to Plato the form of his inimitable dialogues, to which, though clever in its way, it is far inferior.

self, gave a supper in his honour. Meeting Socrates and some of his followers, he invited them to come, saying that "his party would be much more brilliant if the rooms were graced with the presence of men of culture and refinement, instead of being filled with generals and cavalry officers, and political place-hunters."

When they were seated, the dazzling beauty of Autolycus became a "cynosure" to the eyes of all the guests. They were like men impressed by a superior presence. They gazed on him in a sort of awe, and proceeded with their supper in silence. This mood was interrupted by a knocking at the door, and Philippus, a professional buffoon, requested entrance. He was told to join the feast, and attempted some jokes, which at first met with no response, till his comic expressions of grief at finding that "laughter had gone out of fashion, and that his occupation was gone," set some of the guests a-laughing.

Presently a "nautch" was introduced. A man of Syracuse brought in a girl who played on the flute, and a boy and girl who danced. After having some music, the host suggested that perfumes should be handed round. Socrates opposed this, saying that "the only odour which a man ought to relish was the smell of the oil used in the gymnasia." To which the father of Autolycus said, "That's all very well for young men, Socrates, but what are old fellows, like you and me, who no longer frequent the gymnasia, to scent ourselves with?" "With the odours of honour and virtue," said Socrates. Whereon it was asked "where such odours could be procured?" And an incipient

discussion arose, which was presently dropped, "whether virtue could be learned from others?"

They then witnessed some feats of the dancing-girl, who threw up and caught twelve hoops to the sound of music, and afterwards threw somersaults through a hoop stuck round with swords. This wonderful exhibition caused Socrates to remark, that "the talent of women is not at all inferior to that of men, though they are weaker in bodily strength. So that any one who had a wife might confidently instruct her in whatever he wished her to know." This observation caused Antisthenes to put it to Socrates, "Why, if he thought so, did he not educate Xanthippe,* instead of leaving her the most notoriously ill-conditioned wife in existence?" To which Socrates replied, that "as those who wish to excel in riding often choose restive horses, because if they can ride these they will easily manage any others; so he, wishing to converse and associate with mankind, had chosen to have a wife of this kind, knowing that if he could bear her society, he would be able to get on with any one else in the world."

Then the boy danced, and was admired by all; and Socrates excited much amusement by telling the Syracusan that he should like to learn dancing from him. When the company laughed, he gravely informed them that "he was sure the exercise would do him a great deal of good; it called out all the powers of the body, and might be conveniently practised in private, which would just suit him."

Philippus, the jester, now gave a comic parody of

* See above, page 90, note.

the boy's dancing, and when exhausted with his exertions, called for some wine, which Callias commanded to be handed round ; and Socrates gave his theory of the way in which they ought to drink—"not in huge quantities at once, which would be like a deluge of rain beating down the plants, but in small cups repeated frequently, which like gentle dew would refresh their spirits." And this mode of potation was made the order of the night.

There was more music ; but Socrates urged that they ought not to be entirely dependant for their amusement on these children, but should by conversation entertain each other. The question now arose, "What each of the party most prided himself on?"

Callias prided himself on making others better.

Niceratus, on knowing all Homer by heart.

Critobulus, on his beauty.

Antisthenes, on his wealth.

Charmides, on his poverty.

Socrates, on his powers as a go-between.

Lycon, on his son Autolycus.

Autolycus, on his father Lycon.

Hermogenes, on the merit and power of his friends.

Then they had to justify their boasts, and it turned out that Callias was proud of making others better, because he did so by giving them money, so as to render them less necessitous, and less tempted to do wrong. Niceratus was proud of his knowledge of Homer, as being an encyclopædia of wisdom. For present purposes he wished to apply his knowledge

by asking for an onion, which Homer said was the proper accompaniment of drink. Critobulus prided himself on his beauty, on account of the influence it had over others. Charmides, on his poverty, for he had not half the trouble since he had lost his estates. Antisthenes, on his wealth, for it consisted in having little, but wanting less. Hermogenes, on his friends, because these were the gods who took such care of him, as to intimate by dreams and auguries what he ought to do and what avoid. Socrates, on his skill as a go-between, which consisted in making people acceptable to others, and on a larger scale pleasing to the State. And this he effected by improving their minds. All these different claims and assertions led to various repartees. And, amongst other things, Socrates disputed the pre-eminence in point of beauty with Critobulus. The beauty of anything consisting in its adaptability to its proper function, Socrates argued that his own prominent eyes, which could look to the sides, must be handsomer than those of Critobulus. His broad nostrils, more adapted for smelling, must be handsomer than a delicate nose. His huge mouth, which could contain large morsels, must bear off the palm. A ballot-box was handed round among the guests to decide this rivalry, but every vote, as might be expected, was given in favour of Critobulus.

In the mean time the Syracusan became irritated that the attention of the company had been drawn off from his *troupe*, and he began to attack Socrates with some quotations from the 'Clouds' of Aristophanes, calling him "the Thinker," and asking him, "How

many fleas'* feet distant he was!" which some of the others were for resenting as an insult. But Socrates good-humouredly passed the matter over with some light badinage. He turned the subject by himself favouring the company with a song; after which the dancing girl performed some feats on a potter's wheel. On which Socrates made a remark something like Dr Johnson's—"Very wonderful—would it were impossible!" And he added, that after all, "almost everything was wonderful, if people did but consider it. For instance, why did the wick of the lamp give light, and not the brass? Why did oil increase flame, and water put it out? In order, however, not again to disturb hilarity by too much grave conversation, he would suggest that the dancers, instead of contorting their bodies, should perform something graceful and beautiful, like the pictures of the Graces, the Hours, and the Nymphs."

The exhibitor, pleased with this suggestion, went out to prepare; and Socrates, having the coast clear for a while, gave a discourse on love, distinguishing the heavenly from the earthly Venus, the latter inspiring mankind with love for the body, the former with the love of the soul and of noble actions. This distinction

* One of the absurdities attributed to Socrates in the 'Clouds' of Aristophanes (v. 145-199) is, that he undertook to demonstrate how many of its own feet a flea had leapt, in jumping from the eyebrow of a disciple on to his own head. He is represented as having solved the problem by catching the flea and plunging one of its feet into melted wax, by which means he got a measure of the feet, and then was able to divide the total distance by the size obtained!

was copiously illustrated with instances, and the discourse ended with an address to Autolycus, exhorting him to nobility of life, and to prepare himself for serving his country. When it was concluded, the actors entered, and performed a ballet, representing the loves of Bacchus and Ariadne. The guests now retired to their homes; but Autolycus, who was in training, set out to take a walk, in which he was accompanied by the host, his father, and Socrates.

And here we must take leave of the great Athenian sage, on whom, though he left no writing of his own, so many volumes have been and will be written. In another imaginary dialogue, that on "Household Economy," Xenophon introduces him, but only to make him a mouthpiece, so we may be content to treat that work merely with reference to the matter of its contents. Xenophon's representation of his master is considered to be inadequate; and yet we shall have failed to do justice even to that representation, if we have not led our readers to conceive of Socrates as of a very remarkable, wise, and lovable being.

CHAPTER VI.

THE 'EDUCATION OF CYRUS.'

THE 'Cyropædeia,' or 'Education of Cyrus,' is, like the 'Anabasis,'* misnamed. For only the first few chapters are about the education, properly so called, of the Persian monarch. The remainder of the work, extending to eight books, and being nearly the largest of the writings of Xenophon, treats of the successful exploits of Cyrus as a general, and a military and civil organiser, under his uncle Cyaxares, till he finally receives from the latter the hand of his daughter in marriage, and is placed on the throne of Media. The work closes with an account of the distribution into satrapies of the countries conquered by Cyrus ; and of the sage advice which he gave, when his death drew nigh, to his sons and his chief officers of state—advice, says Xenophon, which was but too much neglected by his successors, who forgot his maxims, and by their misrule suffered the excellent institutions of Cyrus to fall into abeyance, and the national character of the Persians to decay.

* See page 10.

And yet the name conveys generally the main purpose which Xenophon apparently had in view when writing this work. He wished, not to write history, but to compose a historical romance, in which should be depicted a perfect governor of men. And the perfection of the generalship, administration, and monarchical rule of Cyrus, was meant to be attributed in the first instance to the excellent education* which he had received in youth. All is of a piece with this conception. The hero of the book is possessed of Utopian excellence. His virtues are unalloyed by any vice, and his successes by a single reverse. Evidently, then, we have before us one of those novels with a purpose which have been common enough in modern times, and which are generally considered to be rather poor works of art. Xenophon's is the first elaborate production of the kind which remains to us from antiquity, though probably the allegorical sermons of the Sophists (see above, p. 109) were in the same direction.

In giving any account (and much will not be required) of the 'Education of Cyrus,' we must remind the reader that this is not the same Cyrus as he whom Xenophon knew personally, and under whom he marched from Sardis to Cunaxa. The Cyrus of the

* Some modern translators have tried to find a name which should apply to the whole contents of the book, by calling it 'The Institution of Cyrus,'—the word "institution" being in obsolete English capable of being taken for "education," and also being applicable to the "form of government" described as being introduced by Cyrus. But the word *pædeia* in *Cyropædeia* has no such double application.

'Anabasis' (see above, p. 11) was a mere pretender to the Persian throne, and died B.C. 400. The Cyrus of the 'Cyropædeia' was the Great Cyrus, who founded the Persian Empire, and died about 525 B.C. Of this great conqueror's history there are three accounts remaining: the first is that of Herodotus, the father of history; the second is that of Ctesias, a Greek physician, who was employed at the court of Persia, and wrote a history of the country; the third is that given by Xenophon, and of all the three the last mentioned is generally considered as the least to be depended on. The curious thing is that Xenophon, writing what he meant to be a historical romance, has made it infinitely tamer than the account of Cyrus given by Herodotus, who aimed at merely setting down the historical facts as they had been told him. The Cyrus of Herodotus is sent out, when newly born, by his grandfather to be murdered; he is saved by interposition of Providence, brought up as the child of a herdsman, and subsequently recognised; he revolts against his grandfather, overthrows the Median kingdom, founds the Persian Empire, and finally is slain in a great battle against Tomyris, queen of the Massagetæ. The Cyrus of Xenophon is brought up in all decorum as befitted the grandson and nephew of a king; he is duly appointed to high offices in the state, obtains many easy victories, and inaugurates many state improvements; he succeeds peacefully to the throne of his uncle, and on a quiet death-bed gives lectures to his admiring friends upon the arts of government and the immortality of the soul. This was a case, then, in which truth was

stranger than fiction; for the purpose of Herodotus was truth, whereas the purpose of Xenophon was fiction of a particular kind—not the fiction which grasps the poetry of human life, but the dry fiction which treats all incidents as a mere framework on which ethical or political moralisings may be hung.

It may be supposed, however, that Xenophon, who under the younger Cyrus had penetrated into the heart of the Persian territory, must have had great opportunities of studying Persian customs, and that his book would be found to contain valuable information with regard to those customs, and to the Oriental character viewed on its best side. But in this expectation the reader is disappointed, for here again we find that it was Xenophon's object to set forth, not facts, but his own conceptions of what ought to be. Throwing the scene of his Utopia into the far East, and the time of his narrative one hundred and fifty years back, he appears to have thought himself emancipated from restrictions of truth, or even probability, and accordingly he transfers to ancient Persia all that he most admired in the Lacedæmonian institutions of his own time. Even the distinctive and remarkable characteristics of the Persian religion are blurred over and confused by his constantly attributing to his hero the performance of sacrifices according to the Grecian mode, and the practice of the art of divination, of which he was personally so fond.

Taking the 'Cyropædeia' as we find it—not as a history, nor as a true picture of national life and manners, nor yet as a romance of the higher kind, like

one of Walter Scott's novels, but as a fiction composed with the object of setting forth views on education and politics—we must allow it certain merits. The purity and elegance of its style are universally acknowledged. And it possesses, as Colonel Mure says, an epic unity of action, within which numerous episodes are artistically introduced, some of them quite idyllic in character. It will be sufficient for our purpose to introduce to the reader a few specimens of these, as there would be little use or pleasure in dwelling on the details of the pseudo-historical campaigns of Cyrus.

Xenophon commences by saying that, on reflecting how constantly governments of all kinds are overthrown, he had come to the conclusion that mankind are far harder to govern than cattle or horses, which are easily brought into obedience. One man, however, had possessed, in a pre-eminent degree, the faculty of ruling over his fellow-men, and that was Cyrus the Persian. How Cyrus should have been able to conquer and hold in subjection so large a portion of the world, seemed to him a problem worth investigation. He had made all the inquiries he could about the natural qualities and education which had produced so remarkable a ruler, and would now proceed to state them, as follows :—

Both the historians and the poets of Persia agree in describing Cyrus as beautiful in person, humane in disposition, and so keen in the pursuit both of knowledge and of glory as to endure all labours and encounter all dangers for their sake. The education which he

received was in accordance with the system of public instruction of his country. For Persia, unlike other countries (this is meant as a hit at Athens, and at the same time as a compliment to Sparta), did not content herself with legislating against crime; she moulded the minds of her citizens from childhood, by a public educational system, to virtue. This system, according to Xenophon, extended only to the higher classes of society. Unlike our Committee of the Privy Council, the Persian educational department appears to have begun from the top. Only those were admitted to the privileges of the state education who were above the necessity of manual labour.

The headquarters of public instruction in Persia are described as being in the metropolis, in a grand square, where the king's palace and the public offices stood, and from which all merchandise and trades, with their "noise and vulgarity," were banished. The square was divided into four parts, which were severally assigned to the boys, youths, men, and elders. The first three classes attended regularly from early morning. The elders appear to have joined the place of instruction at such times as suited them, chiefly to furnish an example to their juniors, but, when on the spot, to have been under discipline like the rest. The youths, till married, slept round the public offices, in light armour, as guards. Each of the four classes was under the control of presidents. In the boys' quarter the time appears chiefly to have been occupied in trying, under the president, all cases of crime and misdemeanour which had arisen among the boys them-

selves. Theft, deceit, calumny, and ingratitude were thus brought to punishment. And it was commonly said that the Persian boys went to school to learn justice, as elsewhere boys go to school to learn to read. To this arrangement the trifling objection might be made, that it seems to imply a very abundant and continuous crop of naughtiness among the boys themselves, else the trials would have come to an end, and the study of "justice" would have been stopped. Xenophon, however, makes no remark on this point, nor does he mention any other subjects of study as entering into the *curriculum* of this model university. Indeed, the education given seems very much to have been based on those "Aryan principles" of instruction of which we have heard of late, and according to which book-learning will always be at a discount. A Spartan system of diet appears to have been prescribed for the boys, consisting of bread and cresses, with water to drink. The boys learned shooting with the bow, and throwing the javelin; and at the age of seventeen they passed into the class of youths.

From seventeen to twenty-seven the chief means of cultivation for the youths appear to have consisted in patrol-duty and hunting. On the advantages of hunting as a preparation and training for war, the Persians, according to Xenophon, laid great stress, and the youths were constantly engaged in formal hunting-parties under the king. They bivouacked in the open fields, and were restricted to the most ascetic fare; and as a result of this system Xenophon mentions that every Persian avoids, as a piece of bad manners,

either spitting or blowing his nose—"a rule which it would be impossible to observe, except by men who had practised great moderation in diet and exhausted the moisture of their bodies by exercise."

Under this mode of instruction, which Xenophon does not further describe, Cyrus was brought up till twelve years old. He was then taken to see his grandfather, Astyages, king of the Medes. By his lively prattle he pleased Astyages, and was invited to remain for some time at his court. Cyrus begged his mother to let him stay, because, he said, "he knew how to shoot well enough already, and by stopping amongst the Medes he should have a better opportunity than at home of learning to ride." His mother's objection was that he would forget all about "justice." But Cyrus said that he quite understood justice, and did not require to learn it any more. "How so?" said Mandane. "Why," said Cyrus, "I have often been appointed to decide cases, and I only made one mistake. That was in the case of the boys and the coats. There was a big boy who had a little coat, quite too small for him. And there was a little boy with a large coat, very loose upon him. So the big boy made the little boy exchange coats with him, and I decided that he was right in doing so, and that each boy should keep the coat that best fitted him. But the master beat me for giving this decision, for he said that it was against the law to force a person to give up his property, and that justice consisted in obeying the law. So, now I know what justice is." This story—which has probably been made familiar

to most of our readers by that most delightful book for childhood, 'Sandford and Merton'—shows the sort of materials from which Xenophon constructed his work; for it evidently conveys in a lively form one of the favourite doctrines of Socrates (see above, page 114). A combination of the teachings of Socrates with the institutions of Sparta is what Xenophon wishes to recommend under the shallow disguise of Persian names and the picture of a foreign court.

The educational institutions of Sparta, by themselves, Xenophon would probably not have deemed adequate, as not being sufficiently awakening to the intellect. One of the most interesting indications on the subject of education which he gives is contained in a charming description of the boy Cyrus, of whom he says: "He was, perhaps, a little over-talkative, but this was partly from education; because *he was obliged by his master to give a reason for what he did*, and to require reasons from others, when he had to give his opinion in judgment; and partly, because, being very eager for knowledge, he was always putting questions to those about him on many subjects, to ascertain how such and such things were; and from being of a quick apprehension, he gave very ready answers to all questions that were asked him;—so that from all these circumstances he acquired a habit of loquacity." The method of instruction here indicated, in this *Émile* of the fourth century before Christ, is well worth attention. It implies that the one thing to be aimed at in educating boys is, to arouse their intelligence into activity. This forms a great contrast

to the spirit of modern education, which aims rather at imparting results and foregone conclusions, and which many people are now beginning to complain of, as fostering servility of mind and want of self-reliance. Cyrus, according to the account of Xenophon, stayed four or five years at the court of his grandfather, during which time he was not at all spoilt by the indulgence which all showed him, and the luxury which he saw around him. He developed in manly qualities, became a bold and passionate rider, hunted the animals in the royal park (or "paradise"), and then took to more real and dangerous sport in riding after the boar and other animals in their native wilds. On one occasion the Assyrians made a raid over the Median borders, and Astyages took out troops to intercept them. The youthful Cyrus, about fifteen years old, went with him in a new suit of armour, and at an opportune moment advised that a dash should be made at the enemy. The charge was made, the boy joined, and gradually headed it. "As a generous dog," says Xenophon, "that has no experience, hurries headlong without caution upon a boar, so Cyrus pressed forward, minding only to strike whosoever he overtook, and heedless of anything else." The enemy gave way, and the Median cavalry had complete success. Cyrus was almost mad with excitement; and while the rest were retiring, he did nothing but ride round by himself, and gaze upon those who had fallen in the action.

Such was his first essay in arms. He was shortly afterwards recalled by his father, in order that he

might complete his education. On returning to Persia, he continued another year in the class of the boys. He lived cheerfully on the same rigorous fare as the rest, and surpassed them all in exercises and in diligence of attention. With the exception of some advice from his father, which has very much the appearance of some of the conversations of Socrates, we hear no more, after this, of the "education of Cyrus." He had now reached man's estate, and on a war between Media and Assyria breaking out, he was appointed to command the Persian force of some forty thousand men which was sent to assist the Medes. He immediately made a long speech, in the style of the Xenophontic orations in the 'Anabasis,' to his chosen body-guard. After this follows an account of improvements effected by Cyrus in the army—a topic which gave Xenophon a good opportunity for developing many of his favourite theories on military organisation. Ambassadors arrived from "the king of India" to learn the particulars of the quarrel between Media and Assyria, and Cyrus sagaciously conciliated them by proposing that the king of India should be made arbitrator in the question.

The chief of Armenia, a country subject to the Medes, showed signs of revolt at this juncture, and Cyrus took his army for the purpose of reducing him to obedience. Having adroitly surrounded the Armenian chief, and made him prisoner, he proceeded to try him solemnly on the charge of treason. Xenophon uses this opportunity to introduce a conversational debate, after his own heart. Tigranes, son of the

Armenian, had resided in Persia, and had often been one of the hunting companions of Cyrus. Cyrus recollected that he had noticed this young man associating with a philosopher,* who went about with him and instructed him. He now came forward and requested to be heard in his father's defence. Being readily allowed by Cyrus to speak, he pleaded, not that his father had been innocent, but that by captivity and fear he had been reformed, and that it would be infinitely better policy in Cyrus to accept him as a humbled and grateful dependant, instead of putting him to death. The arguments of Tigranes, backed by his own generous impulses, prevailed with Cyrus, and in the handsomest terms, mixed with some *badinage*, he spared the life of the Armenian chief, only taking from him a moderate fine. He then turned to Tigranes and asked what had become of his friend the philosopher. "He is no more," said Tigranes, "for my father here put him to death." "What crime," asked Cyrus, "did he find him committing?" "He said that he corrupted me," answered Tigranes; "and yet, Cyrus, so noble and excellent a man he was, that, when he was going to die, he sent for me and told me not to bear my father the least ill-will for putting him to death, because he was doing it not out of malice, but out of ignorance, and whatever faults men commit through ignorance ought to be considered involuntary." "Alas, poor man!" said Cyrus. On this the Armenian chief interposed, and said, "It was jealousy, Cyrus;

* The word used by Xenophon is "sophist," which means a professional teacher of philosophy and rhetoric.

I could not help hating that man, because I thought he stole my son's heart away from me. My son admired him more than he did myself." "Well," said Cyrus, "that was a natural weakness of yours, and your son must now forgive you." The introduction of this incident, in obvious allusion to the treatment of Socrates by the "fathers" of Athens, is very characteristic of the manner of the 'Cyropædeia.'

Perhaps the most famous episode which the book contains is the tale of Abradâtes and Panthea. In one of Cyrus's battles with the Assyrians, the enemy's camp was stormed, and a great prize, both in spoil and prisoners, was taken. Among the captives was Panthea, a lady of Susa, the wife of Abradâtes, an Assyrian prince, who was himself absent, having been sent on a mission to Bactria. The Median officers, in disposing of the booty, set aside this lady as a complimentary offering to Cyrus. He, learning what had been arranged, requested Araspes, for whom he had had a sort of friendship from boyhood, to take charge of the lady. Araspes, on receiving the order, asked, "But have you seen the person whom you wish me to take charge of?" Cyrus replied that he had not. On which the other said, "*I* have seen her, though, and she is simply the most beautiful creature that was ever born of mortals throughout the whole of Asia. Even when she was sitting on the ground, covered with a veil, there was something about her that distinguished her from the other women. But when she stood up, still veiled and weeping, she was not only divinely tall, but had an indescribable grace and tragic

nobleness in her attitude. To comfort her, we told her that no doubt her husband was an excellent gentleman, but that she would now belong to one who in every respect was at least his equal, for that if there was a man in the world that deserved admiration, it was Cyrus. On hearing this, she rent her veil and uttered a lamentable cry, and her women cried out with her. And we saw the greater part of her face and her hands. There never was such a woman. You must go and see her yourself."

"By heavens! I shall do nothing of the kind, if she is such as you describe," said Cyrus. "Why not?" asked the young man. "Why, because if I were now to yield to your description, and go and see her, overwhelmed as I am with business, I daresay the sight of her might make me wish to go again, and thus I might perhaps neglect what I have to do, in order to sit gazing at her." At this Araspes laughed, and asked Cyrus "if he thought that the beauty of any human being could put a constraint on another, so as to force him to act differently from what he judged best? Love," he argued, "is an affair of the will; else, why does not a brother fall in love with his sister, or a father with his daughter?" But Cyrus said, "If love be voluntary, why cannot a person cease loving when he wishes to do so? I have seen people," he added, "weeping from love—made regular slaves—giving away all they had, wanting to get rid of their love, and yet held as if by an iron chain—victims of a complete fascination." "They must be poor creatures," said Araspes; "any man who is worth anything can

look at a beautiful woman without its making any difference to him. At least, I am sure I feel this about our beautiful captive." "Have a care," said Cyrus, "and above all things guard this lady well, for she may be of great political importance to us some day or other."

So ended the conversation, and the confident boastings of Araspes; who, partly from seeing the beauty of his prisoner, and partly from her worth and goodness, and partly from waiting on her and finding her not ungrateful, and partly from her attentions to him when he was ill—from all these causes combined, succumbed to the fate which he had derided, and became hopelessly in love with Panthea. Which, as Xenophon remarks, was not a very wonderful occurrence after all. When, however, Araspes at last ventured to intimate to her the change in his feelings which had come about, and the great passion by which he was now possessed, Panthea would not listen to him for a moment. She protested her unswerving love and constancy to her absent husband; and when Araspes in despair uttered cruel threats, she sent a private messenger to Cyrus to acquaint him with what had happened. Cyrus, on hearing it, burst out laughing at the man who had said that he was above the power of love. He sent Artabazus, a confidential officer, to enjoin Araspes most strictly to do no violence to the lady, but at the same time to say that he had *carte blanche* to make as much impression on her as, by fair means, he could. Artabazus, however, appears not to have given this exact message. He rated

Araspes soundly for his unfaithfulness to a sacred trust, and for his weakness, impiety, and wickedness ; so that Araspes was overwhelmed with shame and confusion, and half-dead with fear of some great punishment at the hands of Cyrus. Cyrus, hearing of his distress, sent for him alone ; bid him be reassured ; told him that he might easily be forgiven, since both gods and men yielded to the power of love ; and finally took the blame to himself, as having shut him up with such an irresistible creature. Araspes, however, still made moan, that all men would point at him, and that even his friends advised him to keep out of the way of Cyrus, as likely to do him harm. "This is most opportune," said Cyrus, "for now you will be just the man for me to send as a spy into Lydia. You can pretend to fly from me and go over to the enemy, and you will get their confidence, and be able to give us the most valuable information." This arrangement was speedily made, and the love-stricken Araspes departed on his mission, and disappeared from the scene.

The beautiful Panthea now suggested that she should send for her husband, who, in gratitude for the treatment she had received, would be certain to desert his Assyrian master, and come over to Cyrus. She was allowed to send ; and Abradâtes, having recognised his wife's tokens, and heard how matters stood, marched joyfully to the camp of Cyrus, bringing with him about a thousand horse. Having declared who he was, he was admitted within the lines, and embraced his wife tenderly after so long a separation. He then

waited upon Cyrus, and extending his right hand, said, "In return for the benefits that you have bestowed on us, Cyrus, I can say nothing more than that I give myself to you, as a friend, a servant, and an ally." Cyrus said, "I accept your kindness, and take leave of you for the present, that you may go to supper with your wife; at some other time I shall hope to receive you in my tent, together with your friends and mine."

Not long after this, it came about that Cyrus had to fight a great battle against the enemy, who were now an army of all nations under the command of Croesus, king of Lydia. While the disposition of the forces was being made, Abradâtes, prince of Susa, obtained, partly by entreaty and partly by lot, a conspicuous position in the front line of Cyrus's army. He made a splendid figure, for he had a chariot with four poles, drawn by eight horses; and his wife Panthea had arrayed him in a golden helmet and golden arm-pieces which she had procured, and a purple robe reaching to his feet, which she had made. When he was preparing to mount his chariot, she bade him farewell, saying, "You know, Abradâtes, that if ever a woman loved her husband better than her own soul, I am such a one. And yet, loving you as I do, I love honour more, and would rather be buried with you, in your glory, than live with you if either of us were dishonoured. You will remember the debt of gratitude which we owe to Cyrus, and in this battle you will discharge it." Abradâtes laid his hand gently on her head, and, lifting his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "May

I prove worthy of the love of Panthea, and of the friendship of Cyrus !” He then mounted, and Panthea, as a last adieu, kissed the chariot, and was borne off by her attendants to her tent, and the line began to move against the enemy.

There was a mighty battle against great odds, for the army of Croesus quite outflanked that of Cyrus, and enclosed it, “as a large brick might enclose a smaller one,” on all sides but the rear. But the gallantry of the smaller force prevailed, and none on that day made a fiercer charge than Abradâtes of Susa, who, being posted against the Egyptians, overwhelmed and crushed them in his weighty chariot, armed with scythes. But in the furious *melée* that ensued, the prince himself, pursuing his victorious course, was thrown from his chariot, and, fighting like a brave man on foot, was cut down and killed.

The next day after the battle had been won, Cyrus asked, “Where was Abradâtes, that he did not come to see him ?” They said that he was no longer alive, and that his wife had carried his body to a spot near the river Pactolus, where her eunuchs were digging a grave for him, while she sat on the ground with the dead man’s head upon her knee. On learning this, Cyrus struck his thigh, and leaping upon his horse, rode, with an escort, to the scene of affliction. When he reached the spot, he approached the corpse, and shedding tears, he said, “Ah ! brave and faithful soul, hast thou then left us for ever ?” and he took hold of the right hand, but the hand came away, for the wrist had been cut through by an Egyptian. On

this Panthea shrieked, and taking the hand kissed and replaced it, and said, "All his body is like this, Cyrus, and it is my doing, for, not thinking of the result, I exhorted him not to spare himself for your sake. And now he is dead, and I who encouraged him sit here alive." After weeping for some time in silence, Cyrus said, "He has died a noble death, and numbers of men shall raise a monument to him, which shall not be unworthy of him or of us, and sacrifices shall be performed in honour of his bravery. And for you, every care shall be taken of you; and when you tell me where you wish to be sent, it shall be done." Panthea replied, "You shall soon know, Cyrus, to whom I wish to go." Cyrus now departed, sorrowing. And Panthea, having ordered her eunuchs to retire, called her nurse, and bade her, when she was dead, to wrap her and her husband in one mantle. She then produced a sword, which she had provided, and stabbed herself, and the nurse, wailing, covered them both as Panthea had directed, and three of the faithful eunuchs slew themselves on the bodies of their master and mistress. Cyrus, when he heard of it, lamented exceedingly, and caused a lofty monument to be raised over the noble and unfortunate pair.

This narrative, which we have given as nearly as possible in the words of Xenophon, is the first extant instance of a prose love-story in European literature. It was much admired by the ancients, and probably gave rise to many imitations of itself. Plutarch, in his essay to prove "that the doctrines of Epicurus do not secure even pleasure in living," asks (p. 1093)

“whether the actual enjoyments of love could be superior to the imaginative pleasures felt in reading the tale of Panthea as related by Xenophon, or the tale of Timoclea as told by Aristobulus, or of Thebe by Theopompus!” These two last writers were historians of the time of Alexander the Great, who appear to have introduced love episodes into their histories, which are now lost. As in old Homer, and as in India at the present day, the conception of love in the story of Panthea is a conception of post-nuptial, and not ante-nuptial, passion. The action commences, so to speak, at a point after the third volume of a modern novel would have concluded. As such, and on account of its simplicity, the tragical story of Abradâtes and Panthea may be despised by the English reader, especially if unmarried. But taking the ancient Greeks as they are, we may find some interest in observing the points in which they differ from ourselves.

After his victory over Crœsus, and after taking the city of Sardis, Cyrus proceeded to the conquest of Babylon. Xenophon, like the other authorities, represents him as effecting this by diverting the course of the Euphrates, and entering the city by the river-bed at midnight, while all the Babylonians were engaged in a revel. The whole account is interspersed with a record of the sagacious provisions and wise exhortations of Cyrus, which takes off from its liveliness, and makes the narrative unworthy of the greatness of the event. In vividness and reality this crowning act in the creation of the Persian empire falls far short of those smaller incidents in which

Xenophon had himself taken part, and which he describes in the graphic pages of the 'Anabasis.'

Henceforth the measures of Cyrus for the consolidation of his rule over the conquered nations, and his maxims of government, are recorded. Some of these may be mentioned. His first care was to provide attached and faithful attendants about his own person. In selecting these, the principle he went upon was, to choose men who had fewest family ties, who belonged to the most despised and isolated class, and who could be most absolutely bound by obligations of favour and gratitude. And of these he formed his bureaucracy.

Next, Cyrus turned his attention to the civil business of the empire, which he arranged by a system of bureaux and departments, so as to keep a centralised control of all the ramifications of state affairs. "He was thus enabled, by speaking with a few persons only, to keep every department of business under superintendence; and he had consequently more leisure than another man who had charge but of a single house or a single ship." Having by orderly arrangement secured a certain amount of leisure both for himself and others, he proceeded to employ this in moulding the characters of the upper ranks of society. He encouraged, by many artifices, "all who were able to subsist by the labour of other men" to be in constant attendance at his court, and he set himself to be "a living law" and example of life and manners to these. Each day had its appointed religious services, under the direction of the Magi, and commenced with a

hymn to the gods, which was sung at daybreak. Great moderation and simplicity characterised the style of living in the palace. Everything unseemly was carefully avoided. A strict code of etiquette and politeness was introduced, and differences of rank were marked with appropriate observances. No outbreak of anger or rude laughter was ever to be heard. "You would have thought that the whole court lived entirely for the beautiful."

As a preparation for war (here Xenophon introduces one of his favourite ideas, and not a bad one), Cyrus used to take out all the gentlemen of his court to hunt wild animals on horseback with spears. Thus a great emulation arose in riding and skill of various kinds. And all became inured to hardy habits and long fasts in the open air; and Cyrus himself outvied them all, and showed them his opinion, "that no man has any business with government who is not himself better than those whom he governs." But while setting this example, and taking all this trouble for the education of the upper classes, with respect to the lower ranks of society he took a very different course. He studiously avoided inciting them to any liberal pursuit, and even prevented them as far as possible from exercising the virtues of self-denial. For when a crowd of the common people had to act as beaters in the mountains and forests, he had provisions carried for *them*, but none for the nobles. So that the lower orders, not understanding his aims, and being well cared for, "called him their father, for arranging that they should always continue slaves." This Machia-

vellian policy, which of course is to be considered as an idea of Xenophon's, and not as historical, is in accordance with the ancient Greek notions that society must be based on slavery. It is also akin with the Spartan principle that the government must be for the interests of a ruling caste, while an outlying caste (like the Helots) is to be treated as a mere instrument, with no rights of its own, in the state arrangements.

The policy of Cyrus in governing "dependencies" (for such was Babylon when first conquered) is represented as consisting in constant conciliation of the upper classes, who were to be drawn closely round the monarch; while all the rest were to be equitably treated, but held at a distance. Thus Xenophon describes him as spending infinite trouble and tact on personal attentions to the nobles, who were by these means to be captivated, and turned more and more into friends of the king. All this is interesting, and might be compared, or contrasted, as the case may be, with the action of England (too often without a theory) in relation to its dependencies, such as Ireland of old and India in later times.

After the settlement of Babylon came the division of the whole Persian empire into satrapies, which is better related by Herodotus. And then there were various journeys of Cyrus to revisit his home, where his father and mother were now dead. From his uncle Cyaxares, whom Cyrus had made the head of the greatest empire in the world, he received the hand of a daughter in marriage, with the throne of Media for her dower.

At last, when he was on one of his visits to Persia, being now advanced in years, though apparently in perfect health—after performing some sacrifices and leading in person a national dance—Cyrus was in the night warned by a vision of his approaching end. A being of superhuman dignity seemed to come to him, and to say, "Cyrus, prepare thyself, for thou art now going to the gods." After this vision he awoke, and, taking victims, went to the summit of a mountain, where he sacrificed to Jupiter, the sun, and the rest of the gods, thanking them for their care of him during his long and prosperous life, and for all the omens and signs they had sent him as indications of what he ought to do; and praying for a blessing on his family, his friends, and his country. He then returned home, and lay down to rest. Feeling no inclination to eat, he took nothing for three days, after which he called round him his sons and the chief men of Persia, and addressed them. He told them that he knew his end was at hand, and that when he was gone they were to think of him as one who had lived a happy life. "I have realised," said he, "all that is most highly prized in the successive ages of life—as a child in childhood, as a young man in youth, as a man in maturity. My strength has seemed to increase with the advance of time; I have failed in nothing that I undertook. I have exalted my friends and humbled my enemies, and have brought my country from obscurity to the summit of glory. I have kept hitherto from anything like boasting, knowing that a reverse might come; but now that

the end has arrived, I may safely claim to be called fortunate."

He then turned to his sons, and having assigned the succession to the throne to one, and an immense satrapy to another, he exhorted them to live in concord. And he based this exhortation not only on grounds of natural affection and mutual interest, but also on a regard to what would be pleasing to his own disembodied spirit. He said,* "You cannot surely believe that when I have ended this mortal life I shall cease to exist. Even in lifetime you have never *seen* my soul; you have only inferred its existence. And there are grounds for inferring the continuance of the soul after death. Have we not seen what a power is exercised by the souls of murdered men—how they send avenging furies to punish their murderers? It is only to this belief in the power of the soul after death that the custom of paying honour to the dead is due; and the belief is reasonable, for the soul, and not the body, is the principle of life. When soul and body are separated, it is natural to think that the soul will live. And the soul, too, is the principle of intelligence. When severed from the senseless body, it will surely not lose its intelligence, but only become more pure and bright; just as in sleep, when the soul is most independent of the body, it seems to gain the power, by prophetic dreams, of seeing into futurity. Do, then, what I advise, from a

* The arguments here given in favour of the immortality of the soul, are exactly quoted by Cicero at the end of his dialogue, "On Old Age."

regard to my immortal spirit; but if I be mistaken in thinking it so, then act out of regard for the eternal gods who maintain the order of the universe, and watch over piety and justice. Respect, too, Humanity, in its perpetual succession, and act so as to be approved by all posterity. When I am dead, do not enshrine my body in gold or silver, but restore it to the earth,* for what can be better than to be mixed up and incorporated with the beneficent source of all that is good for men? While life, which still lingers in me, remains, you may come near and touch my hand, and look upon my face; but when I have covered my head for death, I request that no man may any more look upon my body. But summon all the Persians and the allies to my tomb, to rejoice with me that I shall now be in safety, and cannot suffer evil any more, whether I shall have gone to God, or whether I shall have ceased to exist. Distribute gifts among all who come. And remember this my last word of advice: 'By doing good to your friends, you will gain the power of punishing your enemies.' Farewell, dear children; say farewell to your mother from me: all my friends, absent as well as present, farewell." Having said this, and taken every one by the right hand, he covered his face, and expired.

* This is quite at variance with the Persian customs, as related by Herodotus. Bodies could neither be buried nor burnt, because both the earth and fire were too sacred for contamination. They were therefore exposed to be consumed by vultures—a practice still universally maintained by the Parsees, the modern representatives of the old Persian religion.

CHAPTER VII.

XENOPHON'S MINOR WORKS.

XENOPHON, after the completion of his campaigns, had, as we have seen above,* a long tranquil life, probably from his fortieth till nearly his ninetieth year, devoted to literature, during which he not only collected materials for his 'Hellenica' (the contemporary history of Greece), but also wrote his 'Anabasis,' his 'Recollections of Socrates,' his 'Education of Cyrus,' and several minor works above enumerated.† These *opuscula*, composed from time to time, as the fancy took him, show Xenophon as the earliest of essay-writers. His subjects were varied enough, and this circumstance gives an interest to his works; but yet we find that his ideas were somewhat limited. He constantly reproduces under different forms the same ideal type of human life and character. And this ideal type is nothing transcendental or impossible; it is thoroughly healthy, but it has a certain suggestion of mediocrity.

Xenophon had a great capacity for friendship, and a tendency to what in modern times has been called

* See page 80.

† See page 84.

"hero-worship." During his earlier life he had, at successive periods, two great objects for these sentiments—Socrates and Agesilaus, a philosopher and a king. In his 'Eulogy of Agesilaus' he pays a tribute to the king, analogous to that which, in the 'Recollections of Socrates,' he paid to the philosopher. He does not write the life of Agesilaus, but merely gives a brief summary of some of his chief public performances in war and diplomacy, and then dilates upon his virtues. Agesilaus—who, according to Plutarch, was a short, rather mean-looking man, lame of one foot—appears to have produced a great impression upon Xenophon. But Xenophon had not the dramatic faculty requisite for portrait-painting in words. The catalogue of qualities assigned to his hero does not bring a living personality before us, but rather reads like the list of particulars in the Linnæan classification of a plant. Nor is it easy to distinguish the historical Agesilaus of Xenophon, drawn from the life, from the pseudo-historical Cyrus, drawn from fancy. Xenophon in this matter appears almost like a school-boy who can only draw one face, which he accordingly repeats for ever.

Agesilaus was, of course, according to Xenophon, a great disciplinarian, and very scrupulous in all religious observances. "A spectator would have been cheered at seeing Agesilaus first, and after him the rest of the soldiers, crowned with chaplets whenever they returned from the place of exercise, and dedicating their chaplets to Diana; for how can it be otherwise than that a cause should be hopeful, when it

supporters reverence the gods, practise warlike exercises, and observe obedience to their commanders?" *Item*, he was very trustworthy, and "paid such respect to what was divine, that even his enemies considered his oaths and compacts more to be relied on than friendship among themselves." *Item*, he was extremely moderate and self-controlled in eating, drinking, sleep, and all the pleasures of sense. He acted on the principle that "it becomes a prince to surpass private persons, not in effeminacy, but in endurance." *Item*, he was very brave in war, and very successful as a general; very patriotic and subordinate to the laws of his country; very affable and unostentatious as king; living plainly, being accessible to all, and as unlike as possible to the kings of Persia. He attained a great age in health and vigour, and "was borne to his eternal home" honoured and lamented by all. Such is the character of Agesilaus, as given by Xenophon in eleven chapters. It is a dull picture, conveying the notion rather of respectability than of greatness. Those who wish to see a portrait of the same man in brighter colours may refer to Plutarch's 'Lives.'

The 'Hiero,' another of Xenophon's minor works, is a neat little essay in the form of a dialogue, on the advantages, or otherwise, in the lot of a "tyrant,"—that is, an absolute monarch, whose rule has been founded on the overthrow of constitutional government. The history of the Second Empire in France tends to give a particular interest to this discussion, which Xenophon attributes to the courtly Greek poet Simonides and Hiero I., the tyrant of Syracuse. Many would like

to have had the opportunity of questioning Louis Napoleon at the period of his greatest prosperity as to his enjoyment, or otherwise, of the power reached by the *coup d'état* of the 2d December; and such was the kind of question supposed to be addressed to King Hiero by Simonides. Hiero's answer is of the most gloomy description. He says that it is a mere popular delusion to fancy that tyrants are to be envied. They have not half the pleasure, and they suffer twice the pains, that private individuals do. Their enjoyments are dulled by satiety—they cannot travel, they cannot realise the full pleasures of love because they never can be sure that their affection is returned. "Indeed, there are none from whom conspiracies against kings proceed more frequently than from those who have affected to love them with the greatest sincerity." "If peace is thought to be a great good to mankind, tyrants have the least participation of it; if war is deemed a great evil, kings have the greatest share of it. Private individuals, if they go to make war in an enemy's country, still find, as soon as they return home, that there is safety for them there; but tyrants, when they come to their capitals, are conscious that they are then in the midst of the greatest number of enemies." "They distinguish, no less than private persons, which of their subjects are wise and just, and of a constitutional spirit; but, instead of regarding such characters with admiration, they look upon them with dread. They fear men of courage, lest they should make some bold attempt in favour of liberty; men of abilities, lest they should engage in some con-

spiracy ; men of virtue, lest the multitude should desire to be governed by them. But when, from apprehension, they have removed such characters out of the way, what others are left them to employ in their service except the dishonest, and licentious, and servile ?" So far from a tyrant being happier than other men, his state of mind may be summed up by saying that "he passes day and night as if he were condemned by the whole human race to die for his usurpation."

On hearing this statement, Simonides asks, "Why, if such be all that your position of royalty has to give, do you not voluntarily abdicate ?" But Hiero answers that this very thing is one of the worst features of usurped royalty—that it is impossible to set one's self free from it. "For how can any tyrant command sufficient resources to make restitution of property to those from whom he has taken it, or how can he make atonement to those whom he has cast into prison, or for those whom he has unjustly put to death ? In short, a tyrant can have no comfort either in keeping his throne or resigning it ; so the only thing left for him to do is—to hang himself." Simonides, however, offers consolation by observing that the dissatisfaction felt by Hiero proceeds from the amiability of his disposition, which leads him to desire the love of mankind. He assures him that this may still be obtained by a right use of the advantages of his position—by showing graciousness and affability ; by developing the resources of the state, and so benefiting all ; by using his mercenary soldiers as police for the repression of crime ; by spending his private means on

public objects ; and that thus, by enacting the part of a benevolent tyrant, he will be forgiven for being a tyrant at all, and will attain that most desirable end, of being happy without being envied ;—all which is pleasing theory, but perhaps hardly borne out by history.

Several of Xenophon's tracts are on special practical subjects, and of these one of the most interesting is his "Essay on the Revenues of Athens," in which he gives advice for improving the financial position of his country. During the flourishing times of the Republic, the great body of Athenian citizens had been trained to habits of idleness. The state revenues were almost entirely drawn from the contributions of tributary allies, and were largely expended in payments to the citizens for sitting as jurymen (see above, page 96), and performing other unproductive functions, and in the provision of theatrical exhibitions and other pageants.

Xenophon observes that this system was based on a certain amount of injustice towards the allies from whom tribute was exacted, and he proceeds to offer suggestions for rendering Athens more dependent on herself for the means of meeting state charges. These suggestions have not very well borne the test of modern criticism. They are evidently the production of an amateur financier, and not of a practical statesman. One thing particularly strikes the modern reader, and that is—the smallness of the sums in which Xenophon thinks. He speaks of Attica (which, though possessing a silver mine and marble quarries, was still like a small county, with a thin soil) as

"qualified by nature to afford very large revenues." And he seems to think it an immense point to add £10,000 or £20,000 to the revenues of the state.

One of the ways by which he proposes to do this is to increase the number of foreigners settling at Athens, and paying a yearly tax of twelve drachmae (nine shillings) a-head. In Xenophon's time the citizens of Athens, exclusive of slaves, appear to have amounted to only about 20,000. Therefore in order to obtain £10,000 of additional revenue by means of the alien-tax, it would have been necessary to have more foreigners than citizens residing at Athens. To secure this desirable object, Xenophon proposes to give encouragement to foreign settlers by exempting them from military service, and granting them sites for houses—all for the sake of nine shillings per head. The foreigners especially referred to by Xenophon were "Lydians, Phrygians, and Syrians;" and Boeckh, in his 'Public Economy of Athens,' points out that the proposal was similar to what it would be in modern times to encourage the settlement of "Jew traders" in a country, till they outnumbered the original inhabitants, at the same time exempting them from military service, and allowing them to hold land. In any country which was exposed to war, and which had adopted such a policy, it is clear that the citizens would gradually be swept away in battle, while the aliens without patriotic feelings or noble motives would be left in possession of the state.

Xenophon's next idea is, that the commerce of Athens should be stimulated by encouragements, and

facilitated as much as possible. It seems to us an odd suggestion that rewards should be offered to those judges who in mercantile suits should give judgment with the least delay ; and that those merchants who had brought vessels and goods of great account to the port, should be honoured with seats of distinction on public occasions. Xenophon thinks that the state should directly speculate in ships to be let out on profitable terms, and in lodging-houses, warehouses, and shops ; a loan should be raised for this purpose, and our financier assumes that the profit on these ventures would be sure to enable the stock-holders to receive 20 per cent on their contributions. It does not occur to him to ask why, if this form of investment would be so remunerative, private capital should not find its way into it, without passing through the hands of the state.

Another speculation which he recommends to the Government of Athens is the purchase of slaves to be hired out to private individuals, for the purpose of working the silver mines of Laurion, near the southern promontory of Attica. He thinks that the state might gradually collect a little family of ten thousand slaves, and let them out at the rate of an obolus ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.) per head per diem. This would give an annual revenue of a hundred talents, or about £24,000. These slaves would be employed by the citizens, or foreigners, in mining for silver, and one twenty-fourth part of all the ore obtained would be paid to the state as a royalty. The whole calculation is based on the assumption that the silver mines of Laurion were inexhaustible, and

that under all circumstances of the price of provisions, &c., they could be worked to a profit by slave labour. It is needless to say that such an assumption was unjustifiable.

Boeckh says, that of all the schemes and recommendations of Xenophon for improving the revenues of his country, the only one that is unexceptionable is his exhortation to peace. For the preservation of peace, he has great faith in moral measures. He advises the appointment of "peace-commissioners;" and he recommends that the independence of the temple of Delphi—a question analogous in ancient Greece to the neutrality of Belgium in modern Europe—should be maintained rather by diplomacy than by arms. He adds, "Should any one ask whether I mean that if any power should unjustly attack our state, we must maintain peace with that power?—I should not say I had any such intention; but I may safely assert that we shall retaliate on any aggressors with far greater facility, if we can show that none of our people does wrong to any one, for then our enemies will not have a single supporter." This simple belief in the efficacy of virtue and justice in international relationship, received a rude commentary in the subjugation of Athens to the power of Macedon very shortly after the above sentence was written.

In the 'Economicus,'* or 'Treatise on Housekeeping,' we have Xenophon's ideas on the management of the house and the farm given under the form of a dialogue,

* With the word 'Economicus,' as with 'Hipparchicus,' &c., the word *logos*, discourse, treatise, or theory, is to be understood.

in which Socrates is represented as instructing our old friend Critobulus (see above, page 120), now a family man about forty years old. There is nothing specially Socratic in the instruction—the philosophy is that of Xenophon. The first point in housekeeping, we learn, is to have a good wife. She must be made so by her husband, being married in her fifteenth year. She must be taught by him that her main duty is to have a regard for property. She must learn to stow away things neatly, as on board ship, so that they may take up little room, and may be found when wanted. She must renounce painting and rouging, and must keep up her good looks by taking plenty of exercise within doors in the shape of household duties, such as kneading dough, making the beds, &c., in addition to going about to superintend the work of the slaves. No word is said of her reading, or sharing any intellectual pursuit with her husband; and altogether Xenophon's ideal of an Athenian wife is a flagrant case of "the subjection of women."

After the house comes the farm. Xenophon eloquently sets forth the praises of agriculture, but in the rules of the art he is little explicit. He rather lays it down that agriculture is the easiest of all arts to be learnt; that it is a mere application of common-sense; and that a successful farmer differs from an unsuccessful one, not in knowledge, but in care and diligence. All this has a very dilettante appearance. It contrasts strongly with modern ideas of agricultural chemistry, the application of geology, botany, and physiology to farming, and the constant improvement of machinery

for lessening human toil in agricultural operations. In lieu of such things, or even of the special processes of the ancients, Xenophon gives us a picture of an ideal gentleman farmer, who keeps his body vigorous by active and temperate habits, who practises his horse across country a good deal, and who is a great "ruler of men," having the desirable qualification of making others work for him cheerfully and efficiently.

Xenophon's three remaining treatises on 'Horsemanship,' on 'Cavalry Management,' and on 'Hunting,' cannot be accused of superficiality. They treat of their respective subjects in a thorough spirit, and are evidently the work of a man writing *con amore* about his favourite topics. The 'Horsemanship' has been much admired by those who have read it from a professional point of view. It gives rules first for choosing a horse, and afterwards for grooming, mounting, sitting, and managing him. In order to avoid being cheated in the purchase of a horse, Xenophon tells the reader that he must observe the points of the animal, beginning with the feet as the most important of all. He specifies the properties to be approved and condemned in the hoof, and from this ascends to the legs, and all the other points in a horse's body. If a horse is not a mere colt, his age must be looked to, "for a horse that has no longer the marks in his teeth neither delights the buyer with hope, nor is so easy to be exchanged." If he is already broken, sufficient trial must be made of his paces, mouth, and temper; and if a war-horse is wanted, we must try especially his powers of leaping.

When bought, the horse must be placed in a stable which is under the master's eye. It must be made as difficult to steal the horse's food from his stall as the provisions from the master's larder. It must be observed whether the horse scatters his food from the manger—a sure sign that he is off his feed, and for some reason out of sorts. The ground outside the stable should be laid down with round stones, in order to harden the horses' feet. This sort of precaution was especially requisite among the Greeks, as they had not attained the art of shoeing horses with iron. Xenophon's anxiety on this subject leads him to give the mistaken advice that the groom should never wash a horse's legs, but only dry-rub them; for "daily wetting," he says, "does harm to the hoofs." He is far from countenancing the practice adopted in modern times of cropping the ears and tails of horses. On the contrary, he is for stimulating with water the growth of the tail and forelock, in order to give the animal as much defence as possible against flies; and of the mane, in order to give the rider an ample grasp in mounting. This business of mounting must have been a serious one in Xenophon's day, for the simple expedient of stirrups had never been invented. In fact, if we want to form an accurate idea of rider and horse as conceived by Xenophon, we should look at some of the friezes from the Parthenon in the British Museum. Modern sculptors appear to consider stirrups prosaic, and frequently omit them on that account; but Phidias omitted them in his equestrian figures, because in his time they did not exist. And, without them, the only

ways the ancients had of mounting were either to vault on horseback, or to use as a step a transverse bar affixed to the shaft of the spear, or to have "a leg up," which the Persians managed in a dignified manner, by using the shoulder of a slave. Xenophon gives several directions for the process of mounting, and recommends the reader to practise mounting from the right side as well as the left, as being an accomplishment often useful in war.

All his maxims for the treatment of the horse are of the most judicious description. He gives it as the one golden rule in these matters, "Never approach a horse in a fit of anger; for anger is thoughtless, and will be sure to lead you to do what you will afterwards repent." A horse is never to be struck for shying, as that will only make him associate the pain he feels with the object which before caused him alarm. The rider should touch the object of which the horse was afraid, and then gently lead him up to it, so as to show that it is nothing terrible. Xenophon's system, in short, proceeds on the same humane principles as that of Professor Rarey. He even thinks that a horse may be taught the most showy paces, such as caracolliing and rearing, by the use of the bit and by signs and encouragements, without striking him on the legs at all. "It is on horses thus trained that gods and heroes are painted riding, and those who are able to manage them skilfully may truly be said

'To witch the world with noble horsemanship.'

So beautiful and grand a sight is a horse that bears

himself proudly, that he fixes the gaze of all, both young and old, and no one tires of contemplating him, so long as he continues to display his magnificent attitudes."

The 'Hipparchicus,' or 'Cavalry Officer's Manual,' is a treatise on the duties of the Commandant of the Knights, and is addressed in a friendly tone to the person holding that office at Athens. The regulation number of the Knights was one thousand, but Xenophon intimates that the corps had fallen below that number, and he even suggests that foreign troopers should be enlisted to fill up the ranks. This shows how weak was the cavalry arm of the Athenian republic, and on how small a scale all its operations must be conceived. Xenophon, in treating of these, does not seem to have had any clear idea of the functions of cavalry, as distinguished from infantry, in war. No military rules referring to this subject are given. In one place, indeed, he advises that when the enemy are on a march, and any weaker force gets detached from the main body, a dash should be made at it by the cavalry; and in this he says that the tactics of beasts and birds of prey in attacking whatever is left unguarded should be imitated. Elsewhere he says that cavalry should be supported by infantry, and that the cavalry may be made to conceal infantry among and behind them. But it would have been more interesting if Xenophon had given us precisely the military ideas of the day as to how each force was to act. Perhaps such ideas were little developed; and Xenophon, both in this work and in his 'Anabasis,' shows that to his

mind war was not a science. His contrivances for deceiving the enemy by mixing up grooms with poles in their hands among the troopers, so as to make the numbers appear larger, and other tricks of the kind, have a puerile appearance. We cannot help thinking how futile would be such stratagems against the powerful field-glasses of modern times. But this treatise, and much of Xenophon's writing, shows in a strong light the comparative pettiness of ancient warfare, and, we may add, the material insignificance of the Athenian republic. All the more honour to her that in intellectual things she was so great! Xenophon does not fail to lecture his commandant of cavalry on the moral qualities necessary for his position, and, above all, on the temperance, endurance of fatigue, and manly energy which he will be required to exhibit; and he repeats over and over again that the enterprises of war can only be successful with the help of the gods, and must never be undertaken without sacrifices and propitious omens.

Nothing was more personally characteristic of Xenophon than his fondness for hunting, and we have seen above (p. 129) that he considered this exercise the best school of warlike prowess and manly virtue. His '*Cynegeticus*,' or '*Treatise on Hunting*,' embodies the results of his experience in the art, and reinforces the principles which he held in relation to it. This little book is written with all the enthusiasm of an Izaak Walton dilating upon his favourite pastime, and it contains much minute and accurate observation of nature. It was first translated into English by Blane, the

well-known writer on 'Rural Sports,' and he speaks of the work with the highest admiration. He says, "I have been indeed astonished in reading the 'Cynegeticus' of Xenophon to find the accurate knowledge that great man had of the nature of the hare, and the method of hunting her; and to observe one of the finest writers, the bravest soldiers, the ablest politicians, the wisest philosophers, and the most virtuous citizens of antiquity, so intimately acquainted with all the niceties and difficulties of pursuing this little animal, and describing them with a precision that would not disgrace the oldest sportsman of Great Britain, who had never any other idea to interfere to perplex his researches."

The greater part of the 'Cynegeticus' is devoted to the subject of hunting the hare; and it is perhaps a little disappointing, after all that Xenophon says about hunting in general as a preparation for war, to find such a very safe kind of sport made so prominent. Doubtless, however, even running with beagles hardens the physique, and Xenophon was quite right in maintaining (what perhaps in his time it was necessary to maintain) that those nations are most likely to do well in war of which the upper classes have a taste for field-sports. He says, that for a young man who has a competency, the first thing is to devote himself to hunting, and the second thing is to learn other accomplishments.

Hare-hunting, with Xenophon, means to find the hare in her form by the use of dogs tracking her scent; when found, to drive her with these dogs into nets previously set in her runs, or, failing this, to tire

her out and run her down in the open. The *dramatis personæ* in the hunt are the master, who manages the dogs himself, and his net-setter, who must be an active young slave keen for the sport, and, as Xenophon adds, implying his own ignorance of foreign tongues, "he must be able to speak Greek." The dogs to be used are two breeds of the Spartan hound; and Xenophon first says what they ought not to be and what they ought not to do, giving an elaborate and amusing catalogue of the bad styles of hunting which a dog may exhibit. Afterwards he describes the shape and action of a perfect hound. His conception, however, is different from that which Shakespeare had in describing the dogs of Theseus in the "Midsummer Night's Dream":—

"My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flewed, so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-kneed, and dewlapped like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each."

Xenophon thinks that the ears should be "small, thin, and without hair at the back," that the neck should be "long, flexible, and round," and the knees "straight." But he does not expect great speed in his dogs, for he says that the hare can hardly ever be caught by the dogs by pure coursing. He gives many directions for breeding and training hounds, and adds a capital list of names for them, all dissyllables, such as *Psyché*, *Thymus*, *Phylax*, *Rhomé*, *Porpax*, *Æther*, *Actis*, *Hybris*, *Augo*, *Nões*, &c. (Spirit, Courage, War-

der, Forceful, Shield-hasp, Æther, Sunbeam, Wanton, Bright-eyes, Marker).

The sport begins in the early morning, while the scent still lies on the track made by the hares in returning to their forms. Xenophon prefers a northerly wind for scent,—he thinks the moisture contained in the south wind to be a disadvantage; and he says that the full moon by its warmth dulls the scent—added to which the light makes the hares skip, so that their steps are at longer intervals, which is unfavourable to scenting. Truly the moon is made to answer for a great many things in this world! The spring and the autumn Xenophon considers the best seasons of the year for scent; but he would have sympathised with that modern sportsman who talked about “stinking violets,” for he says that in spring, “when the ground is covered with flowers, it inconveniences the dogs by mingling the odour of the flowers with that of the hare.” It is clear that he was accustomed to hunt the hare all the year round, regardless of breeding-times, and to follow her by her tracks in the snow—in short, to kill with dogs and nets whenever the chance occurred. This total want of the idea of game-preserving makes it easy to understand the apparent scarcity of hares in Xenophon’s country. He seems to have considered that to kill a single hare was a fair day’s sport.

His description of the hare is excellent, and he draws a most graphic picture of puss lying in her form. “When she is awake she winks with her eyelids, but when she is asleep, the eyelids are raised and fixed,

and the eyes continue unmoved; also, while asleep, she moves her nostrils frequently, but when not asleep, less often." The huntsman, sallying forth in a light loose dress, with light sandals on, and a thick staff in his hand, when he gets to the hunting-ground, vows to Apollo and to Diana the huntress a share of what may be captured; he then sets his dogs to draw for the scent, which we will suppose to be quickly discovered. "Off go the dogs now with joy and spirit, discovering two or three scents as the case may be, proceeding along and over them as they intersect, form circles, run straight or winding, are strong or weak, are caught up or not; the animals passing by one another, waving their tails about incessantly, hanging down their ears, and flashing their eyes. When they are near the hare, they soon let the huntsman know it, by vibrating their whole bodies, and jealously vying for the lead, now clustering together, now spreading abroad, again dashing on, till at last they hit upon the hare's form and rush in upon her. Up she springs, and away she starts, and the huntsman gives the view-hallo, 'Forward, dogs, forward! right, dogs, right!' and wrapping his coat round his arm, he takes his staff and runs after the dogs, taking care not to head the chase." The hare, running in a ring, is expected to come round to where the nets are set, and so get caught. If not, the hunt must be pursued, as with beagles in modern times; and all the incidents of the day are described in the most lively manner by Xenophon, with instructions for the tactics to be pursued, and the proper cries and modulations of

the voice to be used. When the hare has been caught, either by hunting or by driving it into the nets, the huntsman takes up his snares, and having rubbed down the dogs, quits the hunting-field, stopping occasionally, if it be noon-tide in summer, that the dogs' feet may not become sore on the way.

The element of nets in Xenophon's hare-hunting may be considered by some to give it a poaching character, which consists in having too great an eye to the pot—that is, to the actual capture of the animal by whatever means, instead of considering the pursuit itself, conducted in noble form and under honourable restrictions, to be the truer end in the sportsman's mind. But, on the other hand, Xenophon's genuine interest in the working of the dogs is a sportsmanlike feature. It is to be feared that no point so favourable can be found in his account of hunting the deer or antelope. One plan that he recommends is to lie in wait before daybreak, and watch the hinds bringing back their suckling fawns into the grassy glades. Then to seize up a fawn from its bed, on which the hind, its mother, hearing its cries, will rush upon the man that holds it and try to take it from him, when she may easily be worried by the hunter's dogs and despatched with his spear. Another plan is, when the fawns are grown older, to separate one of them from the herd of deer, and run down it with fleet and strong Indian dogs. A third is to set snares in the deers' path, consisting each of a noose with a clog attached. When a deer puts its foot into one of these, the clog

will impede its running ; it may then be tired out, and speared by the hunter.

Boar-hunting in Xenophon is a more dangerous and manly sport. When the boar is tracked to his lair, nets are set in the neighbouring outlets, and he is roused by dogs, the hunters following with spears. When he has involved himself in a net he is speared ; but he often turns and charges, and then the spear is used like a fixed bayonet on which to receive his charge. The boar may by a twist of his head wrest the spear from the hunter's hand, who then must immediately throw himself flat on his face, so as to prevent the boar from being able to wound him with his upward-turned tusks, and a comrade must instantly step forward and divert the beast by another attack. Such was the boar-hunting of the ancients—not, perhaps, equal in thrilling excitement to the “pig-sticking” of Anglo-India, and yet full of adventure and risk. Horace * places the love for this sport among the “ruling passions” of mankind, and describes the hunter, when the boar has broken through the nets and got away, remaining out all day in pursuit of him, forgetful of the tender bride whom he has recently married.

Of hunting large game—that is, lions, leopards,

* Odes, I. i :—

“Regardless of his gentle bride,
The huntsman tarries from her side,
Though winds blow keen 'neath skies austere,
If his staunch hounds have tracked the deer,
Or by the meshes' rent is seen
Where late a Marsian boar hath been.”

—Mr Martin's Translation.

lynxes, panthers, and bears—Xenophon speaks briefly as a foreign sport. He mentions that in some places the beasts are poisoned with aconite mixed in lumps of food, and placed in their way. In other places they are intercepted in the plains when they have come down from the mountains at night, and are speared by men on horseback. Elsewhere they are taken by means of pitfalls, with live goats for bait.

Thus far the treatise is of a purely technical character ; but Xenophon, in concluding it, gives way to his love of moralising, and preaches a somewhat incongruous and irrelevant sermon. He returns to his old theme, the excellence of the practice of hunting as preparing a man to serve his country. Then he goes on to the worth of toilsome pursuits in general, and, though virtue is toilsome, says that mankind would not shun the pursuit of her if they could only *see* in bodily form how beautiful she is. This train of thought reminds him of the “Sophists,” or professional teachers of morals and rhetoric. These he denounces as impostors, and in reference to the subject which he has been treating, he calls them “hunters for rich young men.” There is, he adds, another spurious kind of hunters ; namely, the political place-hunters. Their example young men should avoid, and should rather devote themselves to field-sports, with a happy faith that the gods delight in and approve of these, and that by practising them they may become a benefit to their parents, their friends, and their country.

The whole of this peroration is so little in keeping with the former part of a very excellent treatise, that

some are inclined to think that it must have been added on by the hand of a forger. But the manner of the writing is like that of Xenophon, when in his most sermonising and rhetorical vein.* It was perhaps written at a different period of his life from the main body of the 'Treatise on Hunting.' We know that the ancients indulged in frequent revisions of their works; and it is not impossible that Xenophon, at a period when his taste and style had been somewhat impaired by age, took up the chapters on hunting which he had written in his vigorous manhood, and, by way of a finish, added to them this cold harangue.

* See above, page 109.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION.

SOME one of the works of Xenophon is usually the first Greek prose book that is put into the hands of the schoolboy ; but it is for the sake of his language rather than his matter that Xenophon is read in our schools and colleges, and thus he is read in a fragmentary way, and comparatively few people have anything like a complete knowledge of his writings. It has indeed been too much the fault of classical education in England to think exclusively of the language and style, and to disregard the study of the actual life and ideas of the ancients, as treasured up in their books. But in bringing, as in this little volume, an ancient classical author to the notice of English readers, there is no longer the temptation to rest contented with an admiration of the words ; the matter must stand forth, as it were, *en deshabelle*, and the question must be asked, What is this famous author worth for all time, when his sentences have been robbed of that perfection of form which undoubtedly entitled him to be appreciated as an artist of style ?

This is the sort of question which we have now to answer about Xenophon. And in the first place, it must be remembered that in regarding an ancient author from a "real" point of view, there is a historical and antiquarian interest in the very imperfection of his ideas. Flint knives and arrow-heads are prized for our museums, not for their excellence, but for their comparative inadequacy to their respective purposes. So, too, the expression by an old writer of very limited and even erroneous thoughts on subjects with regard to which the world is now better instructed, may be interesting to us as a contribution to the history of the mind of man. From examples of this kind we see that

"Through the ages an increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened by the process of
the suns ;"

and we learn to know how unequal was the greatness of the ancients. While in the spheres of Art and the Beautiful and Abstract Thought the Greeks are the masters for all modern times, we find what an immense advantage over them has been given to us by the development of the separate sciences.

The study of Xenophon's writings is peculiarly fertile in reflections of this kind. He serves very well as the representative Greek of the fourth century before Christ. He stands forth as the product of Athens, of the teachings of Socrates, of the debates in the Agora, and, generally speaking, of the "Aryan principles of education." The circumstances of his

life gave him a wide experience and a sort of cosmopolite point of view. He seems a typical instance of the "sound mind in a sound body." He was endowed with great activity, curiosity, and enlightened intelligence, and he wrote on war, contemporary history, politics, the lives of great men, education, finance, rural and domestic economy, the equestrian art, and the chase. He serves then to us as a measure of ancient Greece in many of the departments of life. And when we read a treatise like the 'Revenues of Athens,' written by a man of his eminence, we see how totally undeveloped in his time must have been the notions of political economy and of foreign politics, as implying a system of different powers in relation to each other. We see the want of the idea of science in his *assuming* that the silver mines of Laurion were inexhaustible, instead of referring to any mineralogical data on the subject. We see a great contrast to our own notions in his opinion, laid down in the 'Economicus,' that agriculture is the easiest of all arts, requiring only the application of common-sense. In the same work we find the indorsement of that degraded conception of the position of the wife in a household, which was one of the weakest points in ancient Greek civilisation. Throughout his histories and military disquisitions we see how comparatively petty and barbarous in their details the most important wars of his day were. No great general had as yet lived; the movement of large masses of troops had not become a science. There was no artillery more formidable than the bow and arrow, or the stone

rolled down a hill. And the least consideration convinces us, that the ten thousand Greeks, with their spears and their pæan, would have had no more chance than so many South-sea islanders, and not half so much chance as the Abyssinians of King Theodore, against a single European regiment armed with the breech-loader.

It is difficult at first to realise the differences in external things between the ancient Greeks and ourselves. It is difficult not to forget that Greek society was based on slavery, and that every house in Athens was more or less filled with captives from Asia Minor or Thrace, or elsewhere, whose vernacular language probably the master of the house did not understand. It does not occur to one to remember that such a simple instrument as the stirrup had never been introduced to assist the riders of ancient Greece. But an author like Xenophon going into homely details, and giving us unfaded photographs of daily incidents, fresh as they occurred twenty-two centuries ago, is of the utmost value in enabling us to see these things, and to "restore" in imagination the life of ancient Greece. No more graphic and stirring narrative than that in which Xenophon traces the fortune of the Ten Thousand was ever written. And his practical treatises on the Horse and on Hunting are excellent in themselves, and are full of interest from an antiquarian point of view.

Apart then from his style, Xenophon's chief merit and his chief service to modern readers consist in the amount of information he has preserved. The 'Ana-

basis' is of course full of information, not only about Greek manners, but also about the state of the Persian Empire, the geography of many interesting countries, and the characteristics of several wild tribes. The 'Hellenica' is a contemporary record of the affairs of Greece for a period of fifty years, and we have only abstained from abridging it, because to do so would be to rewrite a portion of Greek history which has been often and well written in English before. To the 'Memorabilia' men look for a particular kind of information—information about the strange personality of Socrates. It is true that Xenophon has not done the work of recording the conversations of his master as well as might be wished. He had not the fine perception or dramatic faculty which would have been requisite for the task. But the collection of facts which he gives is, as far as it goes, valuable.

The ancients considered Xenophon a "philosopher," and Diogenes Laertius writes his life as such. But his only claim to be called so is, that he was a pupil of Socrates, and wrote anecdotes about him. Xenophon never uses a metaphysical word or utters a metaphysical thought in all his writings. He was a moralist, and apparently he could not understand that Socrates was anything more than a moralist. Xenophon's ethical philosophy was expressed in his 'Education of Cyrus,' though often repeated without variation in other books. It comes to something of this kind—that a man should train his body by hunting and similar exercises, and his mind by debate and discussion; that he should be very sober and temperate;

very god-fearing, especially in the matter of seeking signs and omens; very just and truthful; that he should possess, or acquire, the art of influencing and ruling over other men, and that he should use that art for beneficent ends. Such was the whole duty of man according to Xenophon. It was a simple doctrine, and we can easily see that it was compounded of the Spartan ideas of education, with some of the intellectual and moral ideas of Socrates. We may conclude, then, that Xenophon was no philosopher in the proper sense of the term. Even as a moral essayist, as in the 'Cyrupædeia,' the 'Hiero,' the 'Agesilaus,' &c., he is not strong, but only passable. His strength is not in deep thoughts or elevated sentiments, not as a master of the true and the beautiful, but as a manly, straightforward writer of information, and as having admirably told one deeply interesting story—the epic tale of the Ten Thousand Greeks.

At the same time, we must not refuse to allow to Xenophon a certain amount of originality. It is probable that he had no model before him, either for his 'Anabasis' or for his 'Memorabilia.' And it seems not unlikely that his 'Banquet' may have been the first imaginary dialogue introducing Socrates that was ever written. If so, it gave the idea to Plato, who, taking it up, wrote dialogues that are to the 'Banquet' of Xenophon as the plays of Shakespeare to those of Marlow. The various minor works of Xenophon are specimens of a kind of originality—not the originality of creative genius, but rather a sort of practical inventiveness which showed him what things might

be done, though it did not lead him to do them in the very highest way. Genius, indeed, in the highest sense, we must absolutely deny to Xenophon, who had abundant versatile talent, but who lacked "the vision and the faculty divine." He is not great even as a historian: his 'Anabasis' is wanting in general reflections, and his 'Hellenica' is merely the work of an annalist, standing to Thucydides, whose history he undertook to continue, much in the same relation as Smollett occupies towards Hume. We must withdraw, in short, all claim for Xenophon to rank among the greatest writers of antiquity. He comes into a second class, and is admirable, as far as his thought and matter are concerned, only for those qualities which we have above attributed to him.

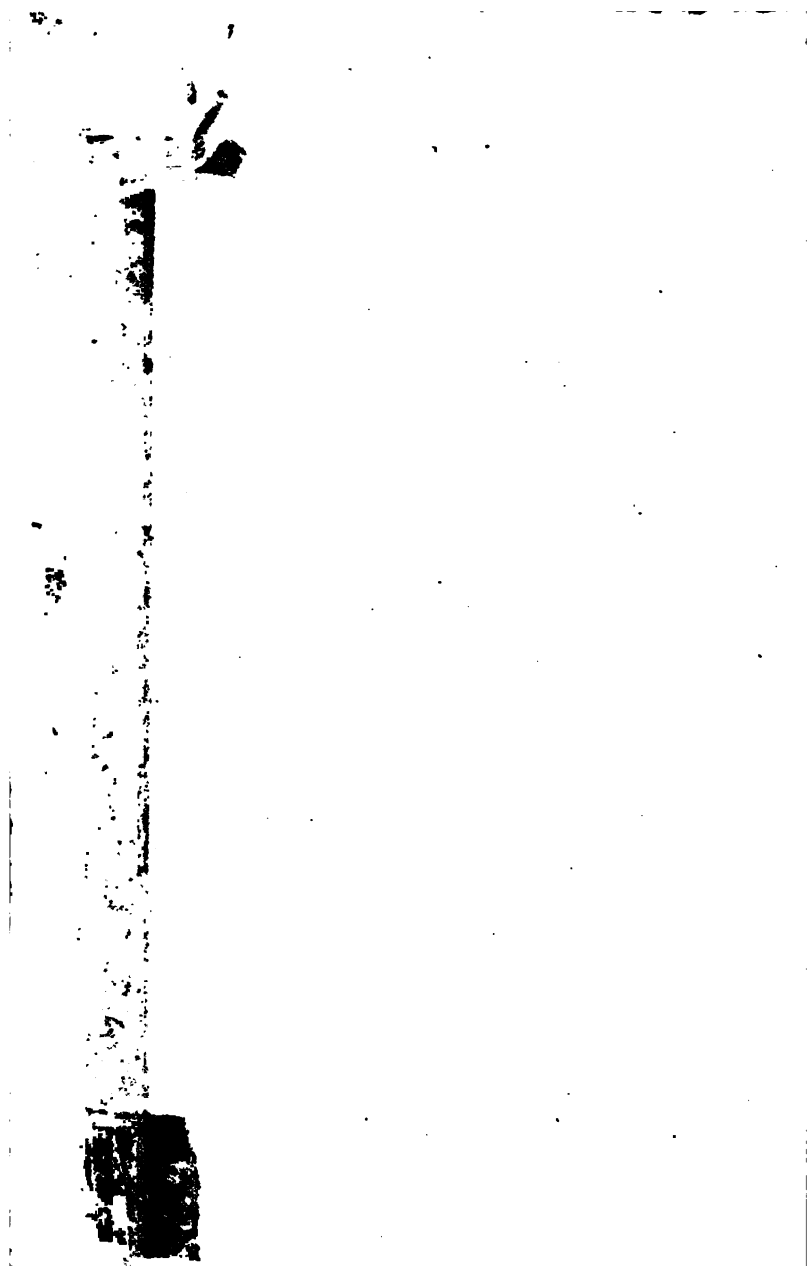
To this extent, and no further, we should agree with Colonel Mure, whose account of Xenophon (in his 'Critical History of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece') is from beginning to end a severe attack. Amongst other things, he impugns the good faith of Xenophon as a historian, and stigmatises him as exceedingly false in the colour which he gives to various transactions. Mr Grote, on the other hand, places unbounded reliance on all the statements of Xenophon. Probably an estimate between these two extremes may be the correct one. It is very likely that Xenophon's account of his own share in the 'Retreat of the Ten Thousand' should be taken *cum grano salis*. It was the practice of ancient historians to insert in their narratives, as having actually been spoken, speeches which they composed in cold blood

as suitable to the occasion. Xenophon, no doubt, followed this plan in writing his 'Anabasis,' and he may have allotted to himself a rather more prominent and favourable position on some occasions than others would have assigned him. Thus far his writing may have been a sort of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*; but there is every reason to believe that the truth greatly preponderated. Xenophon, of course, had his prejudices, and he was a versatile Greek of rather superficial character; but, on the whole, he was manly and well-intentioned, and to consider falsehood as being a prominent characteristic of his nature seems to us to be unjust and unfounded.

Before taking leave of him we must say a word about his style, which this volume has not been able to represent, except in so far as it has enabled the reader occasionally to notice the homely raciness of his expressions. Several instances of this occur in the exact translation given above (page 62) of a long passage from the 'Anabasis.' Colloquial vigour is the eloquence of Xenophon. For the rest he is pure, simple, and lucid. The Greek language had been perfected in Xenophon's youth by sophists and rhetoricians—by the Greek orators with Pericles at their head, and by the great historian Thucydides. Xenophon used the language, thus developed, as an instrument of which he was perfectly master. In his best works he writes as if he did not think about style at all, but simply aimed at saying, in a plain manner, what he had to say. His taste and cultivation gave an unstudied refinement to his diction; and his freedom from all

eccentricity and from all excessive specialty of mind, allowed his writings to attain to a sort of national and universal standard, rather than an individual character. And so it has come about that the model of classical Greek prose is considered to be preserved, not in the laboured antithetical greatness of the style of Thucydides, nor in the lovely half-poetical diction of Plato, but in the everyday sentences which make up the page of Xenophon. Not only are these the study of the English schoolboy, but the newspaper writers of Athens at the present day, in hopes of reviving some of the classical purity of the ancients, are said to be diligently engaged in teaching the corrupt modern Greek language to copy Xenophon.

END OF XENOPHON.





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